# THE Husbandmans COMPANION:

CONTAINING

One Hundred Occasional Meditations Reflections and Ejaculations, Especially Suited to Men of that Employment.

Directing them how they may be Heavenly-minded while about their Ordinary Calling.

By *Edward Bury* Late Minister of Great *Bolas* in *Shropshire*.

Psal. 77. 12.

*I will meditate also of thy works, and talk of thy doings.*

*LONDON*,

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On Worship

Licensed, and

Entred according to Order.

To the Worſhipful his much Honoured Friend,

*Rowland Hunt* of *Boare-Eatton*

In the County of *Salop*, Eſquire,

And to the Virtuous and truly Religious Lady *Frances* Daughter to the Right Honourable the Lord *Paget*, his Pious Conſort,

E. B. *Wiſheth Encreaſe of Grace here, and Glory hereafter.*

*Sir*, and *Madam*,

I Foreſee there may two or three queſtions ariſe upon this my undertaking, in which you may deſire ſatisfaction; the firſt may be, why I write at all? the ſecond, why I write on this ſubject? and the laſt, why I prefix your Names to what I write? To theſe I ſhall anſwer in order; For the firſt, though I hope Gods glory and the publique good, be chiefly intended, yet my own ſatisfaction is alſo included; for I being ſet apart in my Education for the work of the Miniſtry, and dedicated thereunto in my Ordination; and though I have but one talent, I would not have it wrapt in a napkin, when an account is required how I have employed it, leſt I be

found ſpeechleſs, *Aulædus ſit, qui Citharædus eſſe non poteſt*, a man may be uſeful that is not excellent, and therefore I thought it my duty what howrs I could ſpare from my ſecular employments, ſhould be improved, and employed for the good of ſouls: as for your ſecond demand, why I write upon this ſubject, ſeeing ſo many have gone before me, and what I do is but *Alcinoo pomo dare*, or in our Engliſh dialect, to light a candle when the ſun ſhines, *or bring coals to Newcaſtle*? to this I anſwer, if this leſſon be ſo well taught, it is a ſhame it is no better learnt: I fear there is not one of ten amongſt Chriſtians, but are guilty of the neglect of this profitable duty, which I ſuppoſe would bring the ſoul more real benefit, then many litigious controverſies about the modes and circumſtances of worſhip, about which many argue themſelves not only out of Charity, but out of their Chriſtianity, and loſe the ſubſtance, while they ſtrive about the ſhadow, and fill their heads with notions, rather then their hearts with graces: I conceive it is real communion with Chriſt, and the life of faith, that makes the ſoul fat and flouriſhing, and I think that meditation doth conduce as much to this as any duty whatſoever: prayer I know brings in ſupplys from heaven, and ſo doth this; and theſe two uſually are concomitant, and where the one is neglected, the other is ſeldome

dome well performed: Meditation like the *Bee* fetches honey both from flowers and weeds, yea, this divine Alchymiſt extracts gold out of the courſeſt Mettles, and is the true Philoſophers ſtone that turns all into gold, and gold it ſelf into a ſpiritual ſubſtance; thoſe books which reduce religion into practice (which in our days lyes much in the theorick) and ſerve to reconcile the head and the heart, and maintain the vitals of religion, and the power of godlineſs, and further our great deſigne for heaven, ſhould be well ſtudied, and of them I think *ſtore is no ſore*: By this heavenly art of divine meditation, wiſdome may be extracted out of folly, as *Solomon* gained inſtruction by beholding the field of the ſluggard, *Pro.* 24. 30. &c. and doubtleſs man was not plac't in the world as *Leviathan* in the Sea, to play therein; nor indowed with ſo many excellent faculties to be like bruit beaſts, only idle ſpectatours of the works of God; The uſe of reaſon doubtleſs was given for an higher end, to help us to view the Creator in the glaſs of the creature, and every thing lends a helping hand to a willing minde in this work; There is no man ſo buſy if not ſinfully employed, but may finde ſome time every day to converſe with God, and now and then make a journey to heaven, and view thoſe Cæleſtial manſions prepared for thoſe that love God; There

is none ſo dull-witted, if honeſt hearted, but may learn ſome profitable leſſons in natures ſchool; the leaſt worm or gnat, or leaf of a tree, will point out God, to an obſervant Chriſtian: That Meditation is a Chriſtian duty; none that pretend to religion or to reaſon it ſelf, will deny, and that to meditate upon Gods works as well as his word, is our duty, is evident; God ſometimes ſends us to the oxe, and aſs, to learn our duty, *Iſay.* 1. 3. ſometimes to fowls of heaven, the ſtork, the crane, and the ſwallow, *Jer.* 8. 7. ſometimes to the piſmire or ant, thoſe deſpicable inſects, *Pro.* 6. 6. *and* 30. 25. and all to learn our duty; *David* learned humility by beholding the moon and the ſtars, *Pſal.* 8. 3, 4. and Chriſt grounds many of his excellent ſermons upon the various occurrences that dayly fell out, as we ſee in the parable of the ſower and the ſeed, the tares of the field, and the drawnet caſt into the Sea, the leaven, the muſtard ſeed, the fruitleſs figtree, and many others: what heavenly uſe doth he make of earthly things, and all this is for our imitation, that by this means we may of theſe earthly materials frame to our ſelves a *Jacobs ladder* to aſcend to heaven; for all thoſe viſibles will mount us up to beholde inviſibles, and give us a *Piſgah* ſight of the heavenly *Canaan*, even of thoſe things within the

the vail: And that ſoul that hath this heavenly art, can ſet it ſelf on work, and need not be idle or ill imployed, for time will fail us, and death ſurprize us, before we can have ſearched natures garden from end to end, or gathered hony from the ſeveral flowers: here we may walk at liberty, and crop what flowers we pleaſe, and no man is damnified thereby; in other reſpects our bounds are ſet, hitherto may we go and no further, but in this we have an unlimitted circuit: *meum & tuum*, which hath ſet the world in a flame, hinders not in this caſe, the poor here hath as much liberty as the rich, and the ſervant as his maſter, for with the *Bee* we may ſuck ſweetneſs from our neighbours fields and flowers, without his leave or licence, and feed upon his paſture without any dammage to him; 'Tis true in theſe my meditations I have contented my ſelf with a ſmall plot, and but ſeldome paſt the bounds of a garden or orchard, but had the publiſhing of it been deſigned at the firſt, I ſhould not have tied up my ſelf in ſo ſhort a lether, when the whole creation lay before me; The book of the creature ſtands open to us, and God may be read in every line of it, otherwiſe why doth God diſcover to us the ſtate of the fallen angels, and of the rich glutton, and the ſtate of the damned, if no

profitable

profitable uſe could be made of it: no place is ſo barren as a barren heart, each dead tree will yield ſome fruit to us, if the ſoul be not dead: I have pluckt here and there a flower, as others have done before me, and he that comes after us may finde as good as any we have gotten: Thoſe I have gathered are rather to comfort the heart, then to pleaſe the fancy, rather to benefit the ſoul with their vertue, then to pleaſe the eye with their beauty; their nature (if I miſtake them not) is to draw the heart and affections to God, and cool and deadden it to the world and ſin; But a gracious heart is then required to make the extraction, for if it be mixt with the dregs of hypocriſy it will prove uſeleſs: The hypocrite like a puppet in a play, may counterfeit mans ſhape and geſtures, yea, like a parrat his voice, when he underſtands not what he ſaith or doth, yea, ſuch a one mars all he ſets his hands to; but a good man hath an holy heart, as well as a holy tongue, and this will prove a ſoul-fatting Ordinance to ſuch a man; this will raiſe up the heart to heaven, which is one of our ſureſt evidences for heaven; If any yet pleade, there are too many books on this ſubject extant already, the more ſhame for us then that the duty is ſo much neglected, that is not ſufficiently taught, that

is not sufficiently learnt, and I fear those that are readiest to make the objection, are not the most conscientious in the performance of the duty: There are many that make conscience of morning and evening prayers in their families, that spend little time in this duty; if any quarrel at the language these meditations speak, let them know, my designe is, to make men live better, and not to make them speak better; if they speak the language of *Canaan* they will be understood by true *Israelites*, and will be owned by those that had rather be fed then flattered; it is a distempered stomack that must be fed with kickshaws, truth looks best in the plainest dress, and a diamond needs no painting, *via trita est via tuta*, and plain sence is the best orthography of an honest heart: In short, the reason why I write upon this subject is, not to please mens humours, or satisfy squeasy stomacks, but because I judge this to be a necessary, though much neglected duty, and therefore most necessary to be treated of.

As for the last of your demands, why I prefix your names to it, I think there are none that knows both you and me, and my engagements to you, that need stumble at it; but I shall answer it, first negatively, and then affirmatively, I do it not, because I think you have more need of it then o-

others, for I know but few better able then you to gather ſuch flowers as theſe for your ſelves; But it is, becauſe I think you are better able to judge of it then moſt are, and if you think I have not miſt my way, I care not much what thoſe ſay, that never travailed in this road: I ſpeak to thoſe that underſtand the language, for to others, haply I may ſeem a barbarian: A hypocrite may pretend to the language, but underſtands it not, he ſpoils this as well as all his other duties; I preſent this firſt to you, for if it paſs this text, I matter not much what many others ſay of it; And alſo that thereby I may tell the world, rather then you, what my thoughts are of you, and to point them out a pattern for their imitation; for I verily believe, and I think upon ſerious obſervation, that the ſeveral branches of both your families, do maintain the vitals of religion, and the power of godlineſs in as eminent a manner, as any family of your rank that I know in the Nation, and keep themſelves as unſpotted in the world, and as free from the contagious diſeaſes of the times: And he that is the ſearcher of all hearts, knows, I ſpeak my thoughts without flattery or fauning, and I do it for no ſiniſter end: but (as *Solomon* did commend the good huſwife, *Prov.* 31. 29. that God may be glorifyed for his

bounty

bounty to you, and your hands may be strengthned in well doing, and others may take example by you, and your lives may be for their imitation. I cannot praise my present any further, then from the truth of the heart that sends it; had it been better, it had been sent with a better will: I send it as a poor man doth a present to his superiour, not to supply his wants, but to manifest his love, thankfulness and dependence upon him; or as a debtor to his creditor, who when he cannot pay the debt, pays the interest, or at least testifyes his willingness, if ability be wanting: What I have done in this my undertaking, I judged to be my duty; *David* bids us, *commune with our own hearts*, *Psal.* 4. 4. and he calls upon others, *Psal.* 66. 16. *come and hear all ye that fear the Lord, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul*: I have not the confidence to think, that this or any thing I can do can pass the test of this critical age, or indeed can contribute much to the adorning of the spouse of Christ, I know a handfull of goats-hair was not formerly rejected, neither will a cup of cold water where there is no better, nor two mites where there is no more, by him from whom I expect my reward: When you can write fairer then the Copy which will quickly be, you may lay it aside, and give it to some one

that cannot, for whose sake it was chiefly written: but that it may prove beneficial both to you, and yours, and to the Church of God, for the advancing of the the power of godliness, and the life of religion, and the restoring this too much neglected duty of holy meditation, shall be, and is, the desire and prayer of him, who is

*Exon Jan. 1. 1676.*

Your ever obliged Servant,

*Edward Bury.*

To

# To the Reader.

Courteous Reader,

I *Have here presented thee with a bundle of Meditations, most of them occasional; I am not so conceited as to imagine there is any great excellency in them, nor so foolish to trouble my self to write, or others to reade them, did I judge them altogether useless; the duty I know is necessary and beneficiall, and many Christians can write a* probatum est *upon it, and say it hath been so to them, however it is too much neglected by the most; I have not long since published some directions how to perform the several parts of Gods worship, amongst the rest this of meditation was one; and that which is set or solemn was chiefly insisted upon, but that which is occasional more briefly touch't, which indeed cannot well be bounded, but is varied according as the time, place, object, and other circumstances vary, and as the will or capacity of the person requireth, and therefore may be better taught by example then rule: This minded me of some occasional Meditations that had formerly warmed my heart, and not knowing but they might warm others also, and might be a means to restore this beneficiall though too much neglected duty, and therefore gathering together, and reveiwing my scattered papers, and making some additions, substractions, and alterations, I reduced them to the method here presented: that it is every Christians duty I think none will deny, and that it hath been the practice of believers is easy to prove: this was* Isaac's

practice, Gen. 24. 63. and it was Davids work, as the whole book of Psalmes testify, see Psal. 63. 6. and 77. 12. and 119. 15. and 143. 5. and many other places, wherein we see he meditated both on Gods word, and on his works, both by night and by day, and makes it the character of a childe of God or a blessed man so to do, Psal. 1. 2. and a mark of one ripe for destruction not to regard the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, Psal. 28. 5. What I have here written is chiefly for thy imitation, and my desire is that thou maist take out this lesson, prove an artist, and set up for thy self, and follow this gainfull trade that hath formerly brought so much glory to God, and so much profit to poor souls: The method herein propounded is easy, and the duty to an honest heart not hard, yet remember it is the practick part that is like to do thee most good; here maist thou learn to spend thy time, and pass away thy solitary hours better then most men do, for whether thou be at home, or abroad, in publick or in private; this duty may be in some measure performed, yea, by every man, in every place, in every company, and in every employment, though all places are not alike, a gracious heart can steal a thought into heaven, and by a Meditation, and private ejaculation hold converse with God, at any time, neither slave nor servant, though in a Turky-gally can be deprived of this liberty; The want of this heavenly art, or the not using of it is the cause of the misspence of so much precious time, and that there are so many barren and lazy hearts as we daily finde; for as the Bee gathers honey both from flowers and weeds, so doth a diligent man from every thing he sees, hears of, or observes; time is such a precious jewel, that it should not be squandred away, and I know not well how it may be better improved then by Meditation, for this spiritualizeth all we see or hear of; it makes a man never idle, nor ill employed, and drives on a rich trade for the soul, and either leads the soul to hea-

*ven, or brings heaven to it; I know meditation may be abused, some meditate how they may be rich, either by hook or by crook, the ambitious man how he may be honourable, the voluptuous man how he may enjoy his pleasure, but a Christian how he may enjoy his God, and secure his soul; some study mischief upon their beds, some with the spiders gather poyson, where the Christian like the bee gathers honey, and the very business a Christian is about will furnish him with matter sufficient for his work; if the heart be not barren every thing will be fruitful, and there is none so dull if not spiritually dead, but may gather something from visibles to minde him of invisibles; No ship that sails either to the East or West* Indies, *brings home richer lading then meditation doth, if rightly steered; This is the chewing of the cud, that turns all to nourishment, the true Philosophers stone that turns all to gold; by this means the spirits and quintescence of all earthly things are extracted; 'tis true of a Christian endowed with his heavenly art, what the Poets feign of* Midas, *every thing they touch turns to gold, and gold it self into a better substance; the hardest flint, the barrenest tree, the most withering branch, or fading leaf, will yield good fruit to this artist, yea, better fruit then the gardens of the* Hesperides, *which are feigned to bear golden apples, and every sheep will bear a golden fleece, better then ever* Jason *fetcht from* Colchis; *By meditation a Christian is carried into the third heaven, with* Paul, *whether in the body, or out of the body he scarcely knows, and there is enabled to see things inutterable, this makes invisible things visible, and gives a man a* Pisgah-sight *of the heavenly* Canaan. *This heavenly artist can with* Dædalus *make himself wings to fly aloft, and can break prison at his pleasure, neither need he fear the melting of the wax: This keeps the heart in order, and prevents its strayings, it keeps vain thoughts from rising, or at best from roosting: There man's heart*

*is like a mill, if it want grist, it sets it self on fire, and if there be no corn to grinde for God, the devil will throw his tares into the hopper: The heart is always well or ill-employed, and will never be idle; holy meditation puts a man out of satans road, when otherwise he is in continuall danger of falling into his snares, or by being surpriz'ed by his wiles, when the idle person is commonly snared and taken; by this grace is strengthened, and corruption weakned, our evidences cleared, communion with God maintained, and acquaintance with our own hearts gained; it is the way to store the understanding with knowledge, to subject the will to Gods will, to warm the affections, and to put life and heat into all our duties; this discovers to us the sinfulness of sin, and vanity of the creatures, and the fulness of Christ; this reacheth out to us some of* Canaans *grapes, some* Pisgah-*sights of glory, even of those things within the veil, and a taste of those pleasures which are at the right hand of God; such a taste as this, made* Moses *despise the pleasures of* Pharaohs *court, and* Galeacius *esteem all the wealth in the world not worth one days communion with God; this lets us see, there is a worm of vanity bred in our cheifest earthly enjoyments, and eats out the very heart of them, and if they are abused, they will breed and feed the worm that never dies, and kindle that fire that never shall go out; These and a thousand such lessons meditation will teach us, and fastens every lesson upon the heart; who then would not follow so gainfal a trade, and practice so fruitful a calling? Did it enrich the body as it doth the soul, we should have many proficients in this School; some pretenders there are to this duty, but they rather pretend then intend it, they throw down the hammer before they have driven the nail to the head, and lay down the premises, but stay not to raise the conclusion; they follow not the work till they come to resolution and practice; they are like a man that strikes fire, gathers wood, but leaves off be-*

*fore*

*fore it be kindled, and so all his labour is lost; This duty enables a man with* Paul *to die dayly, and with* Stephen *to see God, with* Moses *to talk with God, and with* Enoch *to walk with God; It fits a Minister to preach, and the people to hear, neither of which can be well done without it; that sermon that is not well set on by meditations, seldom heats the preachers heart, and then the people seldom feel it, for a dull and drowsy preacher, makes a dull and sleepy people; when the minister preaches his own life and experiences, this is the life of preaching; This* meditation is a serious bending of the minde upon some useful subject till we bring it to some profitable issue; *Occasionall meditation (which is it we now treat of) ariseth from some occasionall object presented to our sences or understanding, by divine providence, of which though examples may be given, yet hardly can it be restrained, or brought under rules, for it may be varied according to the variety of the objects presented, or other accidents, occurrences, or circumstances that offer themselvs, or the will of the person, or his ability; the objects that offer themselves are various and innumerable, for there is nothing* in rerum natura, *but may be a fit object for occasional meditations; God hath given us a large field to walk in, and choise of flowers, pluck what we will, to put into our nosegay; we may gather honey from flowers and weeds, out of our own or neighbours fields without offence; which way soever we look, within us, or without us, above us, or below us, before us, or behinde us, or on either side, we may see suitable matter for our meditation; above us we may see the sun, moon and stars, these glorious lamps of heaven, who offer themselves not only to our view, but also to our contemplation, their light, their heat, their influence, their various though unerring motions, their magnitude, altitude, number, nature, splendor, vertue and effects may breed admiration in us, as well as in* David, Psal. 8. 3, 4. and 19. 1. *or should we descend to*

*sublunary*

*sublunary things, to the fiery or ayery regions, and ob-*
*serve the several meteors in both, that presents themselves*
*to our view, we may finde matter not only for meditation,*
*but also for admiration; if we consider a while the winde,*
*the snow, the rain, the frost, the ice, &c. all brought*
*out of Gods treasury, Psal. 135. 7. the thunder, and*
*lightning with their strange effects, the strange appari-*
*tions often seen in the air, comets, blazing-stars, dra-*
*gons, fire-drakes, &c. armies fighting in the air, Ly-*
*ons, bears, horses, and many other things there resem-*
*bled, raining blood, wheat, frogs, stones, &c. all this*
*may raise our admiration; veiw but the rain bow in its*
*shape and various colours, it deserves our consideration;*
*The powerful influence of these superiour bodies, in ex-*
*haling, and retaining those hugh weighty and towring*
*clouds, those bottles of heaven in the open air, and wa-*
*tering the earth with them at their makers pleasure, with-*
*out which neither man nor beast could subsist; who can*
*view those things without consideration? or if we look up-*
*on the earth out of which we were taken, we may finde*
*matter enough to exercise our thoughts; observe this huge*
*and massy globe hanging in the air upon nothing; consider*
*it as it is distinguished into hills and dales, and woods and*
*forrests, adorned with sumptuous buildings, Towns and*
*Castles, abounding with trees of all sorts, with corn and*
*grass, with herbs and flowers, watered with rain and*
*showers, rivers, springs, and fountains, inhabited with a*
*thousand times ten thousand living creatures of all sorts,*
*men and beasts, fowls, and creeping things, all main-*
*tained at the great housholders charge, who preserves*
*them in their several kindes; consider also the perenity of*
*rivers, the cause, and perpetuity of springs of all sorts,*
*some hot, some cold, some sweet, some bitter, some salt, some*
*fresh, some medicinal, some not, this observation may*
*take up some time: or should we consider the several mi-*
*nerals lodged in the entrawes of the earth, as of gold, sil-*
*ver,*

ver, brass, tin, iron, lead, allom, brimstone, coals, lime, stone, and much more, and how useful and necessary these are to human life; This may teach us many profitable lessons: Or should we go to sea to see the wonders of the deep, and observe how the huge and roaring element is restrained and bounded by an almighty arm, that saith, hitherto shalt thou go and no further; or if we consider the ebbing and flowing of it, a wonder in nature, or the numberless number of living creatures therein, which are fed and cherished by those salt and brackish waters, yet retain their sweetness, or if we consider the cause why those waters alone are salt, and so remain, though a thousand fresh rivers dayly run into it, together with their strange creatures therein produced: these considerations will take up much time, but of all the creatures God hath made, none yield more matter for meditation, then angels and men; Angels, both the good and the bad, their nature, essence, and offices, and man considered in his body and soul, the order, use, comliness and proportion of the several parts, the vegetative, sensitive, and rational faculties of the soul, the understanding, will and affections, the memory, conscience, and many more, the several sences whereby the soul comes to understand things here below, these things deserve consideration; but to let pass the works of creation, and consider a while Gods works of providence, these will take up much of our time; we may see and observe the course of nature, the generation and production of the several species, with their preservation, protection, and the provision made for them, by their Creator; he maintains the several species by his providence, that for ought we know there is not one kinde of them extinct since the creation; nay, the power of man was never able to destroy those kindes that are noxious to man, and therefore hated by him; yet are these maintained by divine providence at his own cost and charges; But his providence is more clearly seen and discovered in his providence to man,

especially

*especially to his own Church, in maintaining a handfull of men against their numerous enemies; these are preserved as lambs amongst wolves, and is the* bush *that is ever burning, yet never consumed: he spred a table for them in the wilderness, in dispight of their enemies; the wonderful providence of God for his Church in all ages, in Scripture-times, and down to this day, may fix us with much matter for meditation: The word of God also as well as his work, may yield much matter for contemplation; it furnished* David *for meditation day and night, every Book, every Chapter, yea every verse is fruitful abundantly, that had we the years of* Methusalem, *the time would be too little to run through the Scripture, and to consider of all that is held forth therein; here are precepts and promises, threats and examples, for our good, here is the great work of our redemption treated of, which the angels desire to pry into, and eternity is little enough to admire: herein we may behold the subtilty of Satan in tempting man, mans frailty in yielding to the temptation, the nature of sin in throwing man out of paradice, and angels out of heaven; the wisdome of God in finding out a remedy to save some, the love of Christ in dying for them, &c. Nay by meditation we have liberty to ascend heaven also, and view those celestial mansions prepared for those that love and fear God; but I shall add no more, lest I make the gate too big for the structure, only this is my desire, and shall be my prayer, that it may tend to Gods glory, and his Churches good, and so I rest,*

*Thine and the Churches Servant,*

*Edon, Jan. 11. 1676.*

Edward Bury.

The

# The CONTENTS.


Med. 1. *Upon the Earth.* p. 1
Med. 2. *Upon digging the Earth.* p. 4
Med. 3. *Upon a Tuft of green Grass.* p. 6
Med. 4. *Upon a barren plat of ground.* p. 9
Med. 5. *Upon the Earth bringing forth weeds.* p. 13
Med. 6. *Upon a Bush of thorns.* p. 17
Med. 7. *Upon the diligence to be used in a Garden.* p. 21
Med. 8. *Upon birds picking up the seed.* p. 25
Med. 9. *Upon refreshing rain after a dry season.* p. 29
Med. 10. *Upon the plucking off the tops of weeds.* p. 50
Med. 11. *Upon the care men take of their Gardens.* p. 54
Med. 12. *Upon a neglected Garden.* p. 58
Med. 13. *Upon the fading of Beautiful flowers.* p. 61
Med. 14. *Upon Stones in the Garden.* p. 64.
Med. 15. *Upon worms in the garden.* p. 70
Med. 16. *Upon an heap of Ants or Pismires.* p. 75
Med. 17. *Upon the Diligence of the ants.* p. 80
Med. 18. *Upon the gorgeous dress of Flowers.* p. 85
Med. 19. *Upon a Garden spoiled through bad fence.* p. 90
Med. 20. *Upon a Mole spoiling the garden.* p. 95
Med. 21. *Upon the springing up of the seed.* p. 99
Med. 22. *Upon a sudden Drought.* p. 105
Med. 23. *Upon flowers seemingly dead in winter, yet flourishing in the spring.* p. 111
Med. 24. *Upon fair flowers foul-scented.* p. 115
Med. 25. *Upon sweet smelling flowers.* p. 120
Med. 26. *Upon herbs withering in a dry season.* p. 124
Med. 27. *Upon the difference between the various sorts of flowers and vegetables.* p. 130
Med. 28. *Upon withering herbs and flowers.* p. 135
Med. 29. *Upon the springing of herbs in springtime.* p. 140


*Med.* 30.

Med. 30. *Upon a withering knot of herbs.* p.144
Me. 31. *On the unknown vertues of many vegetables.* p.149
Med. 32. *Upon some despicable weeds yet useful.* p.154
Med. 33. *Upon the constant supply vegetables need.* p.159
Med. 34. *Upon the sudden withering of flowers.* p.164
Med. 35. *Upon the sympathy and antipathy of vegetables.* p.169
Med. 36. *Upon the Marigold and other flowers.* p.175
Med. 37. *Upon a rose among thorns.* p.178
Med. 38. *Upon a bed of Camomile trampled upon.* p.184
Med. 39. *Upon receiving in of the fruits.* p.188
Med. 40. *Upon the beating out of the seed.* p.192
Med. 41. *Upon the winnowing of the seed.* p.197
Me. 42. *Upon clean seed sown yet brings forth chaff.* p.202
Med. 43. *Upon the pleasures of a garden.* p.207
Med. 44. *Upon an adder lurking in the grass.* p.211
Med. 45. *Upon a Toad.* p.216
Med. 46. *Upon the coursing of a hare.* p.220
Med. 47. *Upon the labour and pains men take about worldly things.* p.224
Med. 48. *Upon the dilligence of the spider.* p.229
Med. 49. *Upon small flys caught in a spiders web.* p.234
Med. 50. *Upon the worthlesness of a spiders web.* p.238
Med. 51. *Upon the painful and labourious Bee.* p.243
Med. 52. *Upon the taste of honey.* p.248
Med. 53. *Upon the sting of a Bee.* p.252
Med. 54. *Upon bees kil'd for their honey.* p.257
Med. 55. *Upon the sluggish drones.* p.262
Med. 56. *Upon the gaudy Wasp.* p.267
Med. 57. *Upon the painted Butterfly.* p.271
Med. 58. *Upon a gnat playing with the candle.* p.276
Med. 59. *Upon many creatures dead in winter.* p.280
Med. 60. *Upon beggars at the door.* p.285
Med. 61. *Upon the singing of birds.* p.289
Med. 62. *Upon provision made for birds in winter.* p.294
Med. 63. *Upon birds building their nests.* p.298

Med. 64. *Vpon a small bird feeding many young ones.* p.302
Med. 65. *Vpon the prating of a Parrat.* p.306
Med. 66. *On a kite kild by a Fowler eating his prey.* p.310
Med. 67. *Vpon a kite soaring yet minding her prey.* p.315
Med. 68. *Vpon a Bird in a cage.* p.319
Med. 69. *Vpon a bird with a clogg at her foot.* p.324
Med. 70. *Vpon birds observing their seasons.* p.328
Med. 71. *Vpon a snail.* p.333
Med. 72. *On a snail carrying her house with her.* p.337
Med. 73. *Vpon mens misery, labour, and pains.* p.342
Med. 74. *On the difference between a well manured, and neglected Orchard.* p.347
Med. 75. *Vpon a great tree springing from a kernel.* p.352
Med. 76. *Vpon a crab-tree afterwards grafted.* p.356
Med. 77. *Vpon the pruning of a tree.* p.361
Med. 78 *Vpon suckers in a fruit-bearing tree.* p.366
Med. 79 *Vpon a fair but fruitless tree.* p.370
Med. 80. *Vpon a great tree spoiling others under it.* p.375
Med. 81 *Vpon an old, yet fruitful tree.* p.380
Med. 82. *Vpon a leavy yet barren tree.* p.384
Med. 83. *Vpon a dead tree.* p.389
Med. 84. *Vpon a tree seemingly dead in winter.* p.394
Med. 85. *Vpon a great tree tossed with the winde.* p.399
Med. 86. *Vpon trees green in summer, but stript off all in winter.* p.403
Med. 87. *Vpon a tree green all the winter.* p.408
Med. 88. *Vpon trees decay for want of dressing.* p.413
Med. 89. *Vpon promising trees after blasted.* p.418
Med. 90. *Vpon leaves falling in Autumn.* p.422
Med. 91. *Vpon a fruit-tree pelted with stones.* p.427
Med. 92 *Vpon fruit left on the trees after shaking.* p.431
Med. 93. *Upon the many enemies fruit-trees have.* p.436
Med. 94. *Vpon a fair apple rotten at the core.* p.441
Med. 95. *How little comfort the world can afford without food.* p.445

*Med.* 96. *Upon the worth of meat, to those that know the want of it.* p. 450
*Med.* 97. *The world is not a resting-place.* p. 455
*Med.* 98. *Upon sickness spoiling all earthly delights.* p. 459
*Med.* 99. *Upon a rainy day.* p. 463
*Med.* 100. *Upon cold winter-weather.* p. 468

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*Reader,*

Carp not at faults meer literal,
For in this age such are but small;
Nay let not words mistook offend,
The most I fear have deeds to mend:
Let him whose works from faults are free
Be first that throws a stone at me:
*Mens* works have faults since *Adam* fell,
*Mend* those that follow, So fare well.

PAge. 25 line 25 for *out* reade *on*. p. 27. l. 4. *not* left out. p. 93 l. 8 *that* left out. p. 95 l. 9. for *then* r. *that*. p. 102. l. 3. f. *stars*, r. *clouds*. p. 102. l. 17. for *word* r. *clouds*. p. 120 l. 9. f. *and* r. *of*. p. 139 l. 11. for *this stake* r. *the stake*. p. 153 l. 11. for *way*, r. *wall*. p. 161. l. 13. for *savages*, r. *slaves*. p. 169 l. 13. for *occulta* r. *occulta*. p. 181. l. 17. f. *David*. r *Daniel*. p. 184. l. 23. for *petivit* r. *petunt*. p. 200 l. 27. for *waxer* r. *wine*. p. 200. l. 29. for *volunt*. r. *nolunt*. p. 215. l. 13. *hanc* left out.

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Divine

# Divine Meditations

Consisting of

Observations, Applications,

And

Supplications.

## *Upon the Earth.*

### I. Meditation.

WAlking in the garden in the cool of the day, among other things that offered themselves to my consideration, I observed my mother the *Earth*, whence I had my original, and out of whose womb I had my being: I considered how near of kin I was to those senceless clods that lay under my feet, and that I was made of the same matter, a little more refined, and moulded up in a better form, and was made by God a little walking breathing clay, and shortly must return to my first matter, *for dust thou art* (saith God) *and unto dust thou shalt return.* These and the like thoughts had a various operation upon my soul; sometimes it put me on to ad-

mire the workman, that out of ſuch a rude and indigeſted maſs, ſuch courſe ſtuff, could make ſo glorious a piece as the body of Man is, and could indue it with ſuch excellent parts, and ſuch noble faculties, and make it ſuch a rich cabinet fit to hold that precious Jewel the ſoul; which when I had a little conſidered I began to glory, that I was made a man, and did not remain a ſenſeleſs clod; But on the other ſide, when I conſidered my original, *and the rock whence I was hewn, and the hole of the pit whence I was digged*, and that I could ſay, *to corruption, thou art my father, and to the worm, thou art my mother, and my ſiſter*, Job. 17.14. I who was even now proud that I was a man, began to vail my peacocks plumes, when I beheld my black feet, and to wonder at my own folly; and when I beheld my mother, and my relations, I ſaw there was ſmall cauſe of pride, and little cauſe to boaſt of birth or bloud, or great parentage or relations: 'tis a ſhame and ſin for an angel to be proud, much more for a dunghill-bird: Oh my ſoul! bleſs God, that thou waſt made a man, and not a clod of clay, a rationall creature, and not a brute beaſt; thou waſt clay in the hands of this potter, and mighteſt have been the moſt deſpicable creature that ever dropt from his fingers, but *he hath made thee little lower then the Angels, and crowned thee with honour and dignity*: what cauſe then haſt thou to admire thy Creator, who

who made thee thus to differ, and made thee capable of communion with him here, and enjoying him for ever? but beware of pride that raigning damning ſin, that turned Angels out of heaven, *Adam* out of Paradice, and many thouſands into hell; boaſt not of the greatneſſe of thy ſtock, the nobleneſs of thy bloud, the honour of thy progenitors, except thou aſcend as high as thy great Grandmother the *Earth*, who opened her womb to bear us all, and ere long will open her mouth to receive us all, where we ſhall be reſolved into our firſt matter; *then ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was, and the ſpirit ſhall return to God that gave it*; 'tis true, thou hadſt a more noble Father in whoſe image thou waſt made, but this image is loſt, and thou art become more deformed then thy Mother: Oh my God! as thou haſt indewed me with more noble faculties then many other of thy creatures, that I might be better able to ſerve thee, enable me ſo to do; renew thy image in me, which was loſt by the fall, and give me ſincerity without which my condition will be worſe then the beaſt that periſheth, whoſe miſery ends with his life, but mine will begin at my death: *where much is given, much will be required*; as thou haſt made me a man, let me act as a rational creature, and anſwer the ends of my Creation.

*Upon digging the Earth.*

2. *Med.* DIgging and delving into the bowels of my Mother the Earth, to bury those seeds from whence I expected a future encrease, that portion of Scripture came fresh into my minde, *Gen.* 3. 19. *In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread, till thou return to the ground out of which thou wast taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return:* me thoughts my work as it was a just punishment laid upon me for my sin, so it did much resemble the digging of my grave, and put me in minde of my mortality; I began to think that ere long some one would do that for me which I did for these poor seeds, lay me to sleep in the grave, till the Resurrection, and that my mother earth was as ready to receive me as them; the pains and aches I felt, the sensible decays in nature, my gray hairs, *&c.* fastned this cogitation more home upon me; I then began to think of the vanity of man, that was but even now crept out from being earth, and for a time made a great stir and bustle in the world, and then made as much haste out again; and like as stage-players every one acting a part, upon the stage of the world, some longer, some shorter, some better, and some worse, and then an *exit* comes, and they disappear. The godly they act a Comedy, which

which begins bad, but ends well; the wicked a Tragedy which always ends in confuſion; yet whatever part men act, few are willing to go off the ſtage; the old man that hath out-lived his teeth, his hair, his ſight, and hearing, and can hardly uſe his limbs, and ſenſes, yet is loath to die; too evident a ſigne his work for which he came into the world is not done, *viz.* to make his peace with his God, and to get an intereſt in Chriſt, and title to glory; the godly while they are here, are every day quenching thoſe coals which ſin hath kindled, with the tears of true repentance; the wicked are carrying every day a faggot to encreaſe that fire, that never ſhall be quenched: thus 'tis in the world, as in a Fair or market, there is a great crowd, ſome going one way ſome another, and every one driving on ſome deſigne or other: O my ſoul! muſt thou ere long be ſeparated from the body by death, how ſtands the caſe with thee? art thou prepared for ſuch a change, or art thou not? how doth thy pulſe beat? ſuppoſe this were to be the day of thy diſſolution, couldſt look death in the face with comfort? haſt thou made thy peace with thy God? haſt thou got an acquittance ſealed with the blood of Chriſt? a diſcharge of all thy debts? haſt thou provided another habitation againſt this ſhall be diſolved, and moulder into duſt? *when this earthly tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved, haſt thou a building not made with*

*hands, but eternal in the heavens*? haſt thou acted thy part well upon the ſtage of the world, that thou maiſt go off with applauſe? if not, 'tis better thou hadſt not been born; for if death meet thee unprepared, as thy body moulders into duſt, ſo muſt thou down to everlaſting darkneſs, there to ſuffer eternally the demerit of thy ſin. Oh my God! take me not away before I be fit to be lodged in thy boſome: kill me not before my ſin be killed; if any thing that is neceſſary be wanting, Lord give it in, and let me not be deceived in ſo great a thing as the ſalvation of my ſoul: Let my ſins die, and let my ſoul live: Let me ſee the funeral of my vices before others ſee the funeral of my body.

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*Upon a Tuft of green Graſs.*

3. *Med.* WAlking into the Garden as at other times, to take the ayr, I faſtened my eyes upon a green tuft of graſs that grew beſides me; the ſight of it brought to my remembrance what I had often heard and read, *viz.* that the damned in hell ſhould ſuffer exquiſite torments, ſuch as the tongue of men or angels are not able to expreſs, and that for as many millions of years as there are graſs-piles upon the earth, ſands on the ſea ſhoar, ſtars in heaven, and motes in the

the Sun; and yet after all this long tract of time their torments ſhall be no nearer to an end nor they to a delivery, then they were the firſt day they were caſt in; This made me a little to conſider the number of piles that was in this little tuft, and when I found it too hard for me to number them, I conſidered what was this tuft to one paſture, or that to one Pariſh, or that to one County, or that to one Kingdome, or that to the whole world: this made me to cry out, Oh Eternity, Eternity! who can conceive of thee? who can fathom thee? Oh the horrible nature of ſin that provokes a mercifull God to lay ſuch heavy ſtrokes upon his poor creatures! Oh the love and pains of our dear Redeemer! what did he ſuffer to quench thoſe flames, and diſcharge thoſe debts for his people, in ſuffering what was due for their ſins? and oh the madneſs of men and my own folly, that knowing there is ſuch a remedileſs gulf before us, run on ſo madly towards it, and that for momentary pleaſures, deceitfull riches, worthleſs honour, or filthy ſin, do venture the ſoul upon the pikes of danger: Oh the miſery of poor unregenerate wretches! what will you do in the latter end? *who amongſt us ſhall dwell with devouring fire? who amongſt us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burning?* Eſay. 33.14. *Tophet is prepared of old, even for the King it is*

*prepared, the pile thereof is fire and much wood, and the breath of the Lord like a river of brimſtone doth kindle it*, Eſaiah 30. 33. Were a man compelled to lie upon a feather bed but one year without turning or ſtirring, though other comforts were afforded, how painful, how tedious would that year ſeem? but what is this one year to eternity, or what is a featherbed to ſcalding lead, and burning brimſtone? or what is that to hell torments? Oh Satan! how doſt thou deceive us? Oh world! how doſt thou inſnare us? Oh ſin! how doſt thou bewitch us? Oh heart! how doſt thou betray us to this deadly danger? Oh earth! how doſt thou betray thy faſteſt friends, and payeſt them off with pains for pleaſure, and buyeſt their ſouls for a thing of naught? Oh Satan! who would be thy ſervant, if this be thy wages? and yet how many fiſh come to thy net? and how proſperous haſt thou been when thou haſt baited thy hooks with the world? Oh my ſoul! is Eternity ſuch a fathomleſs gulf, without bank or bottom? how ſtands the caſe with thee? art thou for everlaſting joy or endleſs torment? what intereſt haſt thou in the one, or what hopes to avoid the other? what haſt thou that a hypocrite cannot have? or what doſt thou that he cannot do? God ſurely expects great difference in the work, when there is ſo much in the reward;

ward; give thy eyes no ſleep, nor thy eyelids no ſlumber, till thou haſt ſome comfortable aſſurance of the love of God in the pardon of thy ſins, and the ſalvation of thy ſoul: make peace with thy Creditour before thou art caſt into priſon, otherwiſe there muſt thou remain till thou haſt paid the utmoſt farthing: If death ſurprize thee before thou art ready, hell will be thy lodging: get oyl, trim up thy lamp, get on thy wedding-garment, that thou be not ſhut out into utter darkneſs, where there is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth: Oh my God! make me ſuch as thy own ſoul delights in, give me in the qualifications thou haſt made neceſſary to Salvation; thou knoweſt my wants, Lord ſupply them; my debts, oh forgive them; my corruptions, Lord ſubdue them, and binde up my ſoul in the bundle of life; write my name in thy book, and at laſt lay me up amongſt thy Jewels.

a bad heart & good

## *Upon a barren plat of ground.*

4. *Med.* WHen I perceived one plot in my garden fruitful, and another barren, and obſerved the difference between the one and the other, how lovely, how amiable, how pleaſant the fruitful plat ſeemed to me, how freſh and fragrant, how green and ardent it was, how it was diapred with various coloured flowers, beautiful and love-

ly:

ly: and how lothſome, unſeemly and unhandſome the other lookt, where nothing appeared but briars and thorns, weeds and thiſtles, with ſtones and rubbiſh, which was a fit receptacle for toads and ſerpents, and other venemous vermine; I began to conſider it was yet poſſible to reduce this plot into a better form, and turn it to a better uſe: And hereupon I cauſed the rubbiſh to be ſtockt up, the weeds to be pluckt up, and the ſtones pickt out, and after I digged and manured it, and had an effect anſwerable to my expectation; for when it was ſown with better ſeed, it brought forth better fruit: The unlovelineſſe of this plot when overgrown with weeds and rubbiſh, produced this following Meditation: I thought it lively repreſented a heart barren of grace and goodneſſe, but fruitfull of briars and thorns, ſin and wickedneſſe, which is more odious to God then this plot was to me, and yet how lovely a fruit bearing Chriſtian is in his eye, the one is like a loathſome muck-heap which ſtinks, the other like a watered garden that yields a ſweet ſavour, *like a garden of ſpices*, Cant. 4. 14. the one brings forth fruit for Gods basket, the other fewell for the devils fire; all the ſeed ſown upon it is loſt, and choakt with briars and thorns, and all the rain that falls upon it doth but make the weeds more rank and flouriſhing: *their grape*

*is*

*is the grape of* Sodom, *and of the fields of* Gomorrah, *their grapes are grapes of gall, and the cluſters are bitter,* Deut. 32. 32. *they hatch cockatrice eggs, and weave the ſpiders webs; vanity or villany is their trade,* Heb. 6. 7, 8. *the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh off upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dreſſed, receiveth a bleſſing from God, but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned.* The fruitful Chriſtian watered with the word and ſpirit, bringing fortth a harveſt of holineſs; and fruit-trees fit for meat, were not to be deſtroyed, *Deut.* 20. 14. but fruitleſs trees are for the fire, *Mat.* 3 10. But oh how much of this ſterile barren ground is amongſt us? that reſiſt all the offered means of their recovery, and rave and rage againſt both the phyſitian and the phyſick; and though often watered, bring forth nothing but briars and thorns, whereupon all the ſeed, and all the rain that falls upon it is loſt: and when God expects fruit, behold wilde fruit; and yet this wilde and barren ground, if well manured, and God breathe upon it, may prove good land: this conſideration made me with the ſervant in the Goſpel cry out, *Lord, ſpare them one year more, that I may dig about them, and dung them,* that it may not be my fault that they periſh, nor laid to

my

my charge: oh my ſoul! art not thou this barren plot, where nothing but briars and brambles can thrive, or at leaſt wiſe but little good fruit appear? God hath done much for thee, hedged thee about by his providence, watered thee with the dew of heaven; ſent many of his ſervants to manure thee; whence then this traſh and rubbiſh? whence then theſe tares and weeds? was not good ſeed ſown? why haſt thou not anſwered the great Husbandmans expectation? what could God have done more for his Vineyard, then he hath done for thee? well, look to it, if thou remain fruitleſs, ere long he will pluck up thy hedge, pluck down thy wall, take away thy fence, and leave caring for thee, and turn in the wilde boar to devour; he will lay down his baſket, and take up his axe; Oh the patience of a patient God! that hath born with thee for many years, but will ere long, if thou remain fruitleſs, pronounce the ſentence, *cut him down, why cumbreth he the ground*; and if this be the danger of barren ſouls, do what in thee lies to make others fruitfull alſo: *hereby* (ſaith Chriſt) *is my father glorified if ye bring forth much fruit*: Oh my God! *Paul may plant, and Apollo may water, but thou giveſt the encreaſe*, 1 Cor. 3. 6. The harp yeelds no ſound till touched by the hand of the Muſician, and my heart will never be made

good

good till thou ſtrikeſt the ſtroak: 'tis God alone muſt ſay to dry bones, live; man can but ſpeak to the ear, but God ſpeaks to the heart; Lord ſpeak home to my heart, and the work will be done; If means and ordinances would have ſerved turn, the work ere now would have been effected: Lord, leave me not to other husbandmen, for they cannot make me fruitfull; Oh be thou my Gardiner, and my ſoul ſhall flouriſh; blow upon thy ſpices, and they will ſend forth a ſweet ſavour.

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*Upon the Propenſity of the Earth to bring forth weeds.*

5. *Med.* WHen I obſerved the natural propenſity of the Earth to bring forth briars, and thorns, and weeds, and thiſtles, and ſuch unprofitable traſh and rubbiſh, and that it brought forth, fed, and foſtered thoſe of its own accord, without labour or pains, or any help of man; nay, man without much labour and toil cannot deſtroy or keep them under; but choice flowers, profitable herbs, wheat and rye, and other uſefull grain, ſprings not up at ſo eaſie a rate, there muſt be pains taken, digging, plowing, harrowing, ſetting, ſowing, weeding, fencing, watering, and a great deal more,

more, or no good crop can be expected: This Obſervation made me think, that this was the fruits of the curſe laid upon the Earth for mans ſake, *Gen.* 3. 17. *Curſed be the ground for thy ſake, In ſorrow ſhalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life, thorns alſo and thiſtles ſhall it bring forth to thee,* &c. *In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread,* &c. me thoughts the earth in this reſpect, did much reſemble a ſtepmother, to the beſt ſeeds, and choiſeſt fruits; but an own Mother to weeds and rubbiſh; this ſhe brings forth, and brings up as her own, the other ſhe diſowns, but as ſhe is hired or forc't: and if ſhe be not carefully watcht, will either ſtarve, or choak them; and ſhe will ſuffer her own brats to eat the meat that ſhould nouriſh them, and ſuck her breaſts till they are dry: and they ſhall flouriſh while the other pine: This raiſed up my Meditations a little higher, and I thought the earth in this reſpect much reſembled the world, who will willingly nouriſh no children but her own, and plays the ſtepmothers part with Gods children, when the wicked which are her own brats are hug'd in her boſome; if their father look not to them they are thrown to the walls; if any be wronged it ſhall be them; and if any want be, they ſhall ſuffer: *the world loves her own,* Joh. 15 19. however dogs worry one another, yet all agree againſt the trembling hare: *Herod* and *Pilate are made*

*friends*

*friends*, when Chriſt is to ſuffer, and all wicked men are enemies to the power of godlineſs; This propenſity alſo of the earth to bring forth weeds, and to ſtarve the choiſeſt plants, made me think it reſembled alſo the heart of man by nature, which is a fruitful field for briars and brambles, and the weeds of ſin which grow there without planting, but 'tis barren of any thing that is good; 'tis hard to get a good motion, a good inclination, a good reſolution to proſper in that ſoil, but the heart naturally produceth evil thoughts, wicked words, and bad actions, which are the uſuall product it bringeth forth: The hearb of grace muſt be planted by the finger of God, and watered with the dew of heaven, or it will not proſper, moſt of the good ſeed ſown there by the Preachers of the Word is loſt, and comes to nothing; for either it falls among ſtones, or thorns, or by the high-way-ſide, and ſo is choak't, or ſtarved, or ſtole away; and devoured, except the heart be well manured, and the nature of the ſoil changed; except it be well fenc't and guarded, yea, watch't and obſerved, nothing that is good will grow there. 'Tis not in vain that God bids us, *break up the fallow ground of our hearts, and ſow not among thorns*, *Ier.* 4. 3. *Hoſ.* 10. 12. and God is fain to plow deep furrows by affliction, before

before he can reach the roots of the weeds: Oh my ſoul! art not thou this earth that lyes under the curſe, where nothing but traſh and rubbiſh thrives and proſpers? how comes it otherwiſe to paſſe, that thou art ſo prone to ſin and ſo backward to obedience? vices naturally ſpring in thee, without help or labour, without plowing or ſowing, and are rank and flouriſhing; but grace thrives not without much ado, if at all: how comes it to paſs, that ſo much ſeed hath been ſown, and ſo little fruit appears? but that 'tis choakt by traſh and rubbiſh, or pickt up by the fowls of the air; if the devil by his temptation ſows his tares there, he need neither weed them nor look after them, they grow faſt enough of themſelves, the heart cheriſheth and nouriſheth them as her own; but the hearb of grace grows not ſo eaſily: A good thought is hardly brought to a good reſolution, nor a good reſolution to a good action; theſe are uſually ſtifled in the womb; but the product of ſin is much more eaſy: O my ſoul! ſee that the ſoil of thy heart be changed, and true grace be there planted, and the weeds of ſin rooted out, or thou art ſtill under the curſe: Oh my God! rather plow me and harrow me, and pluck and tear me in pieces by affliction, then ſuffer me to be barren or uſeleſs ground:

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be thou the husbandman, and my heart will be fruitful, and yield her encreaſe: blow upon thy garden, and the ſpices will ſend forth a ſweet ſmell: let the ſun of righteouſneſs ſhine upon it, and the dew of heaven water it, and let it be planted by thy own hand, and fenced about, that the wilde boar of the forreſt may not devour it, and it will be no longer barren; ſpeak the word, and the work will be done.

## *Upon a Buſh of thorns.*

6 *Med.* OBſerving a buſh of thorns ſpringing up in a place where I expected better fruit, I cauſed them to be ſtockt up and put into a gap, where a fence was wanting, for the ſecuring the garden, and the preſerving herbs, and flowers from damage and detriment; this occaſioned this following Meditation; As theſe being a fruit of the curſe, ſpring up of their own accord without labour or toil, ſo ſin and corruption, a fruit of the fall, do naturally ſpring up in the ſoul, without any pains; and as the earth own theſe, ſo doth the heart own ſin, as its own proper product; *God curſed the earth for mans ſake, Gen.* 3. 18. and thorns and thiſtles it hath ſince brought forth: This made me conſider,

how faithful God is in the execution of his threats as well as of his promiſes; and of how dangerous a nature ſin is, that produceth ſuch effects; how happy we had been if we had not ſinned, and how miſerable by reaſon of ſin; Had not man fallen, the earth had not been curſed, but would have yeilded her encreaſe, probably, without labour and pain, and man might have ſolaced himſelf in the contemplation of God, and held communion with his Creator, and have had nothing to break his peace with his God; My contemplation upon this occaſion went further, I conſidered how fitly the Holy Ghoſt had compared wicked men to thorns, *Micha.* 7. 4. *the beſt of them is as a briar and the moſt upright of them is as a thorny hedge,* 2 Sam. 23. 6. *the ſons of* Beliall *ſhall be all of them as thorns thruſt away, becauſe they cannot be taken with hands, but the man that ſhall touch them muſt be fenced with iron, and the ſtaff of a ſpear, and they ſhall be utterly burnt with fire in the ſame place.* Thorns as they choak the good ſeed, and nothing can proſper that grows near them; ſo 'tis with wicked men, a godly man ſhall not live by them, but he ſhall be moleſted, if not infected by them; yea, wicked Magiſtrates themſelves, and thoſe that ſit on the place of Judicature, may fitly be reſembled to a thorn; when the

he poor sheep comes for shelter, he is sure to leave some of his coat if not of his skin behinde him; I considered, this also was the fruit of the fall, otherwise man had not been endued with such noxious qualities: whereas now wicked men like the *Amorites* are as pricks in the eyes, and thorns in the sides of every true *Israelite*: These also are the tares, which the devil sows amongst Gods wheat, to molest it, and these are like to grow together till the harvest: I considered also, that as some use was made of thorns for the defence of better fruit, so the wise God doth make some use of wicked men for the good of his people, sometimes he makes them his skullions to scoure off their rust, and make them brighter, whereby they fully themselves; and when their work is done they shall be turned off; Sometimes they are his rod to afflict his Saints, *Isa.* 10.5. *Oh Assyrian the rod of my anger*, &c. but when the childe is reformed, the rod shall be burnt; and sometimes he hath made them a defence for his Church, *Revel.* 12. 15, 16. *The earth helpt the woman, and swallowed up the floud, which the dragon cast out of his mouth after her*; an example of this we have in *David*, when he was in great distresse, compassed about by *Saul*, on this side the mountain, and on that side the mountain, in eminent danger, ready like a

trembling partridge to have fallen into the hands of the greedy falcon; a meſſenger came to *Saul*, ſaying, *the Philiſtines do invade the land*, and he withdrew his army, and departed, 1 *Sam.* 23. 26. theſe *Philiſtines* were but thorns, yet were they a defence to *David* and his followers, and God at laſt will deal with wicked men as with thorns, reſerve them for the fire, for what good they do to the godly is for ends of their own, and not for their ſakes; the *Philiſtines* minded not *Davids* good, nor the King of *Aſſiria* Gods peoples reformation, nor *Haman Mordecai's* and the Jews advancement: O my ſoul! can God turn a curſe into a bleſſing, and can he bring good out of evil, and of theſe thorns make a fence for better fruit? admire his wiſdome, and bleſs his name: hath he done thee good by theſe thorns, whoſe nature were to do hurt, bleſs him for it: he might have made thee the thorn, and for the preſent have ſtopt a gap with thee, and reſerved thee to everlaſting burning; if he hath grafted thee into a better ſtock, and thou bringeth forth better fruit, no thanks to thee: and if thou ſeeſt any, as yet retaining their old natures, deſire not preſently their burning, though they trouble thee; God may make better uſe of them; a perſecuting *Saul* may become a preaching *Paul*; and a wicked *Manaſſeth* a true convert or he may make them otherwiſe

otherwiſe ſerviceable to his people ; Be not therefore like the diſciples that would preſently call for fire from heaven, upon the inhoſpitable *Samaritans* ; if they periſh, their miſery will come ſoon enough ; they may ſay to thee, as ſometime a Souldier did to ſome that upbraided him, grudge me not my grapes, I am like to pay dear enough for them ; ſeeing I muſt die for ſtealing them ; 'tis thy wiſdome rather to ſee thou be not of that number, or otherwiſe thou wilt be reſerved for the ſame condemnation : O my God ! ſuch as theſe I was, and ſuch I had been hadſt thou not made the difference, and too much of that nature remains in me to this day; Oh that thou wouldſt throughly change me! plant me into that noble Vine, that I may bring forth better fruit; yea, purge me that I may bring forth more fruit.

## *Upon the diligence neceſſary to be uſed in a Garden.*

7. *Med.* WHen I conſidered how much time and pains, ſweat and diligence is neceſſary to keep a garden in order, and make it that it may anſwer the expectation of the owner, what digging, delving and manuring, what planting, ſetting,

ſowing, fencing, weeding, watering, *&c.* muſt be uſed, and all little enough, and perhaps too little to produce a good crop; This Obſervation made me to reflect upon my own ſoul, and to conſider whether ever I had taken ſo much time or pains, or been at ſo much coſt for it, the only garden God delights in, and the chiefeſt I ſhould look after, as I have been for a little ſpot of earth: here it is the herb of grace ſhould grow, and this ſhould be a *garden of ſpices*, Can. 4.10. This Conſideration made me bluſh at my own folly, when I conſidered how carefull I had been of a poor worthleſs piece of ground, and had beſtowed ſo much pains and coſt upon it, which yet yielded but a little pleaſure, and leſs profit, and in the mean time neglected the ſoul which is of ten thouſand times a greater concernment; and when alſo I had conſidered the fruitfulneſs of my garden, and the barrenneſs of my own heart, I concluded, had I beſtowed as much time and pains in planting, watering, and fencing that, as I have done in this garden, it would have yielded better fruit then I can expect thence: Well may I ſay with the Spouſe, *Cant.*1.6. *they made me keeper of the Vineyards, but my own Vineyard I have not kept:* I have not taken Gods counſel, *Ier.*4.3. *break up the fallow ground of your hearts, and ſow not among thorns;* and when I conſidered how unfruitful

ful my heart was, I concluded it had not been sufficiently humbled, but the seed was sown among worldly cares and fears, and discontents, and those thorns had choaked it, seeing no more fruit appears: I considered therefore how needfull it was for God to plow long and deep furrows on my back by affliction, that he might come to the root of the weeds; and this same thing quieted me under some dark dispensations of providence; I considered what a folly it was for a man that will not suffer a weed in his garden, and yet will suffer the weeds of sin in his soul, though they are far more pernitious to the herb of grace there planted, then the most pestiferous weeds in the world can be to the choicest flowers; and yet one reigning sin is a greater deformity to the soul then a thousand weeds can be to the faireſt garden: Oh my soul! why art thou so prodigall of time, and pains, of cost, and care, of sweat and industry for a very trifle, and in the mean time neglect thy greatest concerns, thy self, thy God, and thy eternall happiness? when didst thou take so much pains for heaven as thou hast done for the earth? why art thou digging and delving in the earth, as if happiness were hid under the clods, when thou mayest be solacing thy self with thy God? God hath not been wanting to thee, but thou hast been wanting to

thy ſelf, he gives thee time to run thy race, when thou leaveſt thy way to run after butterflies, which if thou take, they will but foul thy fingers: Thou haſt been pruned and dreſt by many choice gardiners, why yet art thou fruitleſs? lay thy hands to the work, tear up thoſe weeds that hinder the flowers: Doſt thou expect happineſs here below, why elſe doth thy affection grovell upon the ground? Will a handfull of herbs, or a boſome full of flowers give thee content? Oh what a poor happineſs doſt thou take up with! Is there no better to be had? ſerve a better maſter, and thou ſhalt have better wages: be a better husband, and thy gains will be the greater; and ſow in a better ſoil, and thou wilt have a better encreaſe. Oh my God! what anſwer ſhall I return for all the pains, and coſt, and time thou haſt beſtowed upon me: O Lord, how have I ſlighted thee! O heaven, how have I undervalued thee! how have I ſuffered the world to bewitch me, and ſteal away my heart from my God? divert my thoughts, rend my affection from theſe earthly vanities; let me ſee more excellency in Chriſt then the world affords, then ſhall I be as covetous for grace as others are for gold, and take as much pains for heaven as ever I did for earth, and be as zealous for God as others are for ſin, and improve my time for the ſpiritual advantage of my ſoul.

*Upon Birds picking up the ſeed.*

8. *Med.* WHen I had ſown my ſeed in the garden, I perceived that which lay uncovered was made a prey to the fowls of the air who pickt it up, and devoured it, this brought to my minde our Saviours parable of the ſower and the ſeed, wherein he diſcovers the reaſon why though ſo much ſeed be ſown ſo little fruit appears, the fault is not in the ſeed, for that is good, the good word of God, though ſometimes the envious man may mix tares with it; Neither is the fault always in the ſower, though ſometimes it may; for many of them are faithfull, and painfull, but for the moſt part it lyes in the ground, in the heart, where the ſeed ſhould be entertained; we finde here there was but one fourth part good, and oh that the one tenth part of thoſe that hear the word were really ſuch; ſome of the ground was high-way ground, not fitted and prepared for a crop, never plowed deep enough, the ſeed indeed was ſown upon it, never in it, it was never covered or harrowed by Meditation, nor ſet out by conſideration, and therefore lyes liable to be pickt up by the wicked one, who will be one at Church, whoever is abſent;

abſent; he makes a path-way over the heart, and hardens it againſt the word, this makes many ſo Sermon-trodden that they receive no impreſſion; ſome we finde was ſown in ſtony places, where it had little earth, and leſs root, theſe rejoice to hear it at preſent; theſe have ſome meltings, and ſome ſudden pangs of joy, but they are too violent to hold out, and like a haſty rain ſlide away, and ſoak not in, and leave but a dew behinde them; they are inlightned by a flaſh of lightning, and not by the ſun beams; they are moved by ſome external principle as clocks or watches, or other engines, but *the root of the matter is not in them,* and therefore withers away, and comes to nothing, like corn on the houſe-top, for when perſecution ariſeth, they are ſoon offended, and Chriſt may take heaven to himſelf for them, if this be his rate of it: ſome ſeed was ſown among thorns, and theſe ſprung up, and choaked it, the cares of the world, and the deceitfulneſs of riches choak it; few rich men can handle theſe thorns, and not prick their fingers; moſt overload themſelves with earth, and ſo loſe heaven, they ſet their hearts with *Saul* upon the aſſes, when a kingdome is before them: theſe like diſſembling hoſts, welcome us into Innes, and at laſt cut our throats; and there is but a little good ground, and that alſo

alſo brought forth variouſly, ſome an hundred, ſome ſixty, and ſome thirty-fold; every man cannot excell, we ſhould ſtrive after the higheſt pitch of godlineſs, and content our ſelves with a low frame of ſpirit, but not diſpair, though we fall ſhort of it; God accounts it good ground that brings forth any good fruit to maturity: This conſideration made me reflect upon my own condition, and call my ſelf to an account what ſort of ground my heart was, ſince ſo much ſeed hath been ſown, and ſo little fruit appears; Oh my ſoul! how comes it thus to paſs, that thou art barren and unfruitfull, how comes it to paſs, the ſeed is loſt after ſo much labour, pains and care, ſo much manuring and cultivating? what could God have done more for thee by the way of means, then he hath done? *why then bringeſt thou forth wilde grapes*? art not thou the high-way-ground? and hath not the devil hardned thy heart, that it is become ſermon-proof, and Ordinance-proof, and doth he not pick up the ſeed which lies loſe upon it, and is not covered by meditation? art not thou a forgetful hearer? and how can that fructifie that is thus ſtole away? or was it not ſown among ſtones? no wonder then if fruit appear not, where a root cannot be had: truſt not to all ſtirring of the affections;

ons : *Herod heard* John Baptiſt *gladly*, and reformed many things, but if the ſtone of the heart be not removed, and a heart of fleſh given thee, how can corn be expected upon a rock that was never ſoftned, mortified, or made fruitfull ? or was it not ſown among thorns ? didſt thou not ſuffer the thoughts, the cares, the fears of the world, or the love, deſire of, or delight in riches, to choak it ? when the heart brings forth ſuch fruits, the word cannot proſper; when the veſſel is full of water, it can receive no other liquor : O my ſoul! if this be thy caſe, beware of it, and prepare thy heart to receive the ſeed, and harrow it in by Meditation : what good will meat do, if not eaten and digeſted ? or what good can phyſick do if not taken ? or a plaiſter if not applied? or the word if not ſet home to the conſcience, and reduced into practice ? empty thy heart of all diſtruſtfull cares and fears, *break up the fallow ground of thy heart, and ſow not among thorns.* Oh my God ! if thou be not the husbandman, there will be no good crop; If thou direct not the plow, there will be no good furrow; If thou bleſs not the ſeed and the labour, all is in vain ; *Paul may plant and Apollo water, but God gives the encreaſe :* If God ſet not a hand to the work, old *Adam* will be too hard for young *Melanchthon*, and the devils tares will thrive better

better then the good ſeed; Man can but ſpeak to the ear, God can ſpeak to the heart; no plaiſter can heal if God be not the Surgeon; no food can nouriſh, if God be not the nurſe; Lord reach my heart, cure my wounds, remove my diſtempers, empty my ſoul of froth and vanity, that the water of life may be received: Say to my ears, *Ephphatha, be opened*, and they will hear; and to my heart, be ſoft, and it will be done; *Say to theſe dry bones, live*; take my ſtony heart into thy furnace, or what good will it do to preach to a ſtone? all the water that falls upon it, will be ſpilt, and all the means of grace loſt: Lord, ſpeak the word, and it will be done; command my heart, and it will obey.

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God gives blessing on man's labs. tis man's duty to return. God thanks for his blessings.

## *Upon refreſhing rain after a dry ſeaſon.*

9. *Med.* WHen I ſaw after a dry ſeaſon, wherein the fruits of the earth languiſhed for want of moiſture, that when a refreſhing ſhower of rain came, how they flourished, grew, and encreaſed, and how freſh and fragrant theſe were, which a little before hang'd the head, and droop't; I plainly then ſaw, that all the pains, and all the coſt, and all the care, which men were at, even about theſe earth-

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ly enjoyments, signifies nothing, if God deny his blessing, if the influences of heaven were but restrained, what would all our care and labour signify? we may rise early, lie down late, and eat the bread of carefulness, and all to little purpose, but how few look up to the true cause of plenty or want; The most are like to hogs under the tree, that eat the crabs, or acorns, when they fall, but regard not whence they come; and murmure if they have them not; I considered the earth wanted the influences of heaven, and the heavens wanted a commission from God, and till that was sealed, the creatures could not be supplied; it was in vain to quarrel, the one or the other; nay, man had no cause to quarrel at any but himself where the obstacle lay; for had not he sin'd, the creatures had not suffered; This made me a little consider the course of nature, and how one creature depends upon another, and every one seems to be made for another rather then for it self; The Sun, the Moon, and Stars, those glorious lamps, and beauty-spots of heaven, in their unceſſant and unerring courses, powr out their heat and light and influence, upon the earth, and by this means the creatures are generated, and the earth refresh't, without which influence it would be but a barren, dry, and unprofitable

ble heap, and all things therein would languiſh, and die. The earth not ingrateful for received favours, conceiveth and produceth corn, and graſs, herbs and flowers, plants and trees, and other vegetables, both for the uſe of man and beaſt, whereby the vegetable and ſenſitive creatures are maintained, beaſts of the field, fouls of the air, fiſh of the Sea, and all creeping things are fed, and cheriſhed: theſe again offer themſelves for food or ſervice to man, their little Lord, and he alone is made capable of communion with his creator; and eſpecially fitted for his ſervice: When I had ſeriouſly conſidered this ſubordination among the creatures, and that every one ſeemed to minde anothers good rather then his own, this led me up to a firſt cauſe, to enquire who directed them to an end they knew not, and led them by a rule they underſtood not; and when I conſidered that all thoſe famous works were made, and thus ſubordinated each to other, and thus directed for the ſake of man, this made me break out with the *Pſalmiſt* upon the like occaſion: *Lord, what is man, that thou art mindefull of him, or the ſon of man that thou regardeſt him; thou haſt made him a little lower then the angels, thou haſt crowned him with glory and dignity, Pſal.* 8. 4, 5. I conſidered that all this rule and dominion, glory and dignity,

dignity, was given him, that he might ſerve, and honour his Creator, whoſe image he did in the Creation moſt lively repreſent, but above all ſublunary creatures, none have more deviated from the rule God hath given them, nor tranſgreſſed his laws, nor fruſtrated the ends of their creation, more then man, by whoſe fall the beauty of the newly burniſht world was ſoon ſtained, and the glory of it ſoon eclipſed. This made me wonder, that God ſuffered ſuch enemies to live upon the face of the earth, to be lords over the works of his hands: Oh the patience, and long-forbearance of a merciful God! that ſuch rebels that have their life, and breath, and being from him, and are guilty of ſo many acts of treaſon, and rebellion againſt heaven, ſhould yet be preſerved and provided for as they are, and ſo many offers of mercy tendred to them: Oh my ſoul! hath God done ſo much for thee, was this glorious fabrick of the world made for thy ſake among others? are the creatures, yea, the angels themſelves ſet a work for thy good? and doth thy great benefactor only require the pepper-corn of homage, and the thankful acknowledgement of what thou haſt received, and obediential homage for the time to come? and doſt thou deny him that? art thou fed and cloathed, maintained and preſerved

ſerved by his providence and care, and haſt thou any meat to eat, or drink to drink, or cloaths to put on, or health, or ſtrength, or limbs, or ſenſes, or peace, or plenty, or life, or breath, or any other enjoyment, but what he gives thee? and is a thankfull acknowledgment of theſe favours denyed by thee? he doth not need thee, neither canſt thou add any thing to his glory, yet he takes himſelf honoured by a thankfull obediential obſervation of his commands; but alas! how much time didſt thou ſpend, before thou diſt cordially yield any thanks to him for his benefits? and how much wanting art thou in it to this very day? he makes his ſun to ſhine upon thee, and his rain to fall upon thee, he gives thee fruitfull ſeaſons, and fills thy heart with food and gladneſs, 'tis doubtleſs then thy duty to devote thy ſelf wholly to his ſervice, and give up not only thy name, but thy heart to Chriſt; Oh my God! doſt thou expect ſervice from me, enable me to do it; I am by nature a ſenceleſs ſtock or ſtone, dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, put life into me, and I ſhall perform the actions of life, I cannot act without thy aſſiſtance; give me help from heaven, for *vain is the help of man, open my lips then ſhall I ſhew forth thy praiſe; inlarge my heart, then ſhall I run the ways of thy commands, touch my tongue with*

*a coal from thy altar then ſhall I trumpet out thy praiſe; ſeek thy ſervant, and I ſhall be found.*

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## *Upon the plucking off the tops of weeds.*

10. *Med.* IN a dry ſeaſon, when the bottles of heaven were ſtopped, and the clouds were bound up, the rain reſtrained, and the ſhowers withheld from the earth, ſo that it was parched hard and dry, and gaped in vain for cooling, moiſtning, refreſhing, ſoftning ſhowers; I obſerved ſome perſons when they could not get up the weeds by the roots, tare off their heads, which when they had done, the garden ſeemed pleaſant to the beholders, and gave content for a while to the ſpectators; who imagined there had been a through-reformation; but not long after, when a ſhower of rain diſtilled upon it, the cheat appeared, the weeds ſprung up as freſh and flouriſhing as before, yea, like *hydra*, with more heads then at firſt, ſo this partiall reformation was diſcovered: This obſervation afforded this Meditation, I thought it much reſembled a partiall reformation in the ſoul, when men begin their reformation at the wrong end, or take a wrong courſe to kill the tree of ſin, as many do, they crop and lop off ſome branches,

ches, and let the root alone, this is not the way to deſtroy it; many tear off ſome of the tops of the weeds but let the root remain in the ſoul, which when it is watered with the devils temptations, and the worlds allurements, and animated with fit occaſions and ſuitable opportunities, they ſpring forth afreſh (it may be) with more heads then before, and then the cheat appears, that thoſe ſins were not kil'd but laid aſide: An evident example we have of this in *Herod*, who convinced by *Iohn Baptiſts* preaching, that his courſes were not good, ſets upon a reformation, falls out with many of his ſins, lops off here one bough, and there another, but lets the root remain firm, which afterwards ſpring forth and ſhew themſelves: It is ſaid, *he reformed many things*, but he left much work behinde undone, to the undoing of his ſoul: The ſore was only skinned over, and was not ſound at the bottom, and after broke out with more violence and greater anguiſh, like a torrent of water dam'd up; when the dam breaks, it runs more furiouſly; So did *Herods* corruption, even to the taking away of *Iohn Baptiſts* head, who before had ſet ſome ſtop to it: And thus it is with many ſeeming Converts, that after prove wicked apoſtates, and perſecute the truth that they did formerly profeſs, the root of the matter was not in them. *Hazael*

did not believe ſo much wickedneſs to lodge in his heart, as the Prophet ſpake of, and afterwards appeared: An apple rotten at the heart may have a fair outſide, but the rottenneſs within will in time rot the outſide alſo; when the fountain is corrupted, it is impoſſible to purge the ſtream: If the heart be rotten, all that thence proceeds will have an ill ſavour: This half reformation hath been the undoing of many forward Profeſſors in our days; they reformed their lives but not their hearts; they lopt off ſome boughs, but medled not with the root; they went to clenſe the ſtream, but not the fountain; and in a little time the corruption within, breaks forth into the life and converſation without; and the unclean ſpirit that was caſt out, takes to himſelf ſeven more worſe then himſelf, and enters in, and *the laſt end of that man is worſe then the beginning*, Mat. 12.45. The devil deals by ſuch when he hath reduced them, as a Jaylour with one that hath broke priſon, lays on more bolts: Runagate Chriſtians are the devils greateſt devotes, and ſuch apoſtates very hardly (if ever) are reduced: O my ſoul! how ſtands the caſe with thee? haſt thou not weeded thy own garden thus, and rather tore off the lops of the weeds then pluckt them up by the root? how comes it elſe to paſs that upon every ſhowr of temptation they are ſo apt

to ſpring up again? look about thee if thou wilt not kill ſin, ſin will kill thee; and if thou wilt kill the curſed tree, ſtub it up by the roots, and not lop off here one branch, and there another, for if the root be dead, the branches will ſoon wither; but if the root live, the branches will revive: The way to cleanſe the ſtream, is to purge the fountain; for ſweet water cannot proceed from a ſtinking puddle: if the tree be good, the fruit will be good alſo; if the ſpring be not dried up, it will ſooner or later overflow the dam: the way to cure the ſore is to heal it at the bottome; and heart-reformation is the beſt way to life-reformation: hypocriſie within will like a botch at length break forth, and a rotten heart will ere long rot the life alſo: O my God without thy aſſiſtance all my endeavours will prove vain: the devil, the world, and my own deceitful heart will beguile me, let me not ſtrive in my own ſtrength, nor fail of thine aſſiſting grace; rather caſt me into the furnace, then ſuffer my corruption and droſs to remain in me; and rather plow deeper furrows by affliction, then ſuffer the roots of the weeds to remain in my heart: turn me, O Lord, and I ſhall be turned; convert me, and I ſhall be converted; let me not take up with a partial reformation, and let nothing leſs then the death of ſin give me content.

## *Upon the care men take of their Gardens.*

11. *Med.* WHen I considered how careful many men and women are to keep their garden in order, and what pains and cost they are at in this thing, and what time is spent to this end; and how many are employed in this work, walling, fencing, and securing it, in digging, dunging, weeding, and much more; there must not a rarity be wanting, that love or labour, or money can procure; there must not a weed be seen, nor hearb, nor flower out of order; what is dead must be supplied, what is wanting must be had, and what is superfluous must be cast away; the tenderest must be secured from frost and scorching sun, and the whole must be formed, after the newest mode and latest fashion: the alleys and walks must be swept and trimmed, and rowled, and levelled; the grass mown, and kept under, and all so exactly done, that it may appear to be an earthly paradice, a place of pleasure and delights: And observing also, that all this while those very persons so curious, and so neat in shaddows, yet neglect the substance, and suffer their own souls, and the souls of their Children, servants, and near relations, the gardens God only takes delight in, to be sadly

ſadly out of order ; and though they make choiſe of the choiſeſt, skilfulleſt, painfulleſt men for the other, they let out theſe gardens to the devils dreſſing, without regard who ſows tares and poppy, cokle, and darnell, weeds and rubbiſh, thorns and thiſtles in them ; and whatſoever bad is, which grows and flouriſhes without controul, and choakes all the good ſeed, that is there ſown, theſe men are made keepers of others vineyards, but their own vineyard they have not kept ; theſe men ſuffer the devil to make a path-way over their hearts, when they only look to the ways in their gardens : I have oft wondred at their ſtupidity in ſpirituals, that are ſo ripe-witted in temporals; and that thoſe that are ſo good husbands for the body, ſhould be ſuch bad husbands for the ſoul, and thoſe that take ſo much pains for a little imaginary pleaſure here, ſhould altogether neglect the true pleaſures, everlaſting joys, at the right hand of God for evermore ; Oh the ſtupendious folly of men, to prefer pebbles before pearls, and gold before grace, and a handful of flowers before an heartfull of holineſs, and the ſhadow before the ſubſtance, and earth before heaven, and a garden before paradice : well, however they do now, the time is coming, theſe men will finde their miſtake, and will alter their

minde, and change their judgment, when grace will be accounted the choiceſt flower in the garland, and a dram of it will be of more value then a cabinet of Jewels, and holineſs will then prove the beſt faſhion, though many now diſdain to wear it: Oh my ſoul! art thou not guilty thy ſelf of thoſe ſins, which thou ſo ſharply chargeſt upon others? doth not this ſhew that thou lookeſt too much abroad, and too little at home; art thou not too deep in the tranſgreſſion, which thou now caſteſt upon others? and puts other mens ſins in the end of the wallet before, and thine own behinde out of ſight; thou art blinde at home and quick-ſighted abroad, *and ſeeſt the mote in thy brothers eye, and not the beam in thine own*; haſt not thou thy ſelf been more prodigall of thy pains, thy time, thy coſt, thy ſweat, for meer trifles, then ever thou haſt been about thy greater concerns? and is any mans folly more conſpicuous then thy own? haſt thou not had thy ears open to thoſe bewitching *Syren* ſongs of pleaſure, and been more tickled with earthly ſenſuall delight then with communion with God in his worſhip and ſervice? when the world hath ſmiled upon thee, how unwilling haſt thou been to die and to be with God? and haſt laid out thy ſelf, thy ſtrength, thy time too much for earthly enjoyments, to

the

the neglect of heavenly riches; ſweep therefore before thy own doors, before thou complain of the foulneſs of the ſtreet; pluck out the beam out of thy own eye, before thou offer thy helping hand to thy brother, to remove his mote; throw the firſt ſtone at thy ſelf, reform what is amiſs, and then thou maieſt reprove another more boldly; get thy affection weaned from the world, and thy eye fixt upon better riches, and more enduring pleaſures, leſt God give thee theſe for thy portion, and what then wilt thou do in the latter end? Oh my God, what ſhall I ſay to thee? how ſhall I anſwer thee? my iniquity is found out this day to be hatefull; had I ſpent but my time for ſpirituall advantages, which I have prodigally waſted for very trifles, it might have been much better with me, had I planted and ſowed in a more fruitful field, I might have had a better crop: Lord, wean me from the dugs of carnal delights, though it be with the gall and wormwood of afflictions, and ſuffer me not to ſurfet on the worlds dainties, leave me not to my own will, then ſhall I undoe my ſelf, *feed me with food convenient*, and it ſufficeth me.

*Upon*

12. *Med.* WHen I ſaw by experience how ſoon a neglected garden grows out of form and faſhion, and in a ſhort time comes to be a rude and indigeſted heap, grown over with weeds and nettles, traſh and rubbiſh, deſtroyed with moles, inhabited with toads, ſerpents, or other vermine, the wall broken down, the fence decayed, beaſts and ſwine making a prey of it, the one tearing off the tops, the other digging up the roots of the tender plants, the hearbs and flowers dying, withering or decaying, choaked by the weeds, or ſtarved for want of nouriſhment, nothing flouriſheth but weeds, and nothing appears but confuſion, and the whole appearing more like a wilderneſs, then a garden; This ſight brought to my minde the ſtate of the poor ſoul, when it is neglected, and not heedfully obſerved, then all run to ruine, and tends to confuſion, nothing that good is, proſpers; nothing that is bad, but flouriſheth; corruption and ſin get the upper hand, and grace is kept under; the fence is let down, the watch is neglected, and the devil, *that wilde boar of the forreſt, deſtroys the tender vines*, roots up every good inclination, ſpoils every good motion, intention

tention and reſolution, and lays all waſte; how many have I known, who when they have been under good Maſters, good parents, good Miniſters, have been very hopeful, and towardly, and were likely to have made good inſtruments in the Church, for Gods glory, if not pillars in the houſe of God; while their graces, and good inclinations were well watered and they received encouragement in their religious courſes; then the flowers of grace ſeemed to flouriſh, and good deſires, holy intentions, and reſolutions, to bud forth, and hopeful beginnings ſhewed themſelves, and promiſing parts gave hopes of future encreaſe; But when theſe fire-ſticks, not well kindled, were once removed from thoſe that ſet them a burning, they were ſoon extinguiſhed; when they had changed their habitations, their company, when they were left to themſelves, or to thoſe that were careleſs of them, they went out of themſelves, and vaniſhed in a ſmoak, or in a ſnuff; then their corruptions ſoon gathered head, and their graces were at an under; they ſoon grew rude, and bruitiſh, and given to ſenſuality, and the hearb of grace for want of rain and nouriſhment, watering, and weeding, was ſoon ſuffocated by vice, and in ſhort time theſe men loſt that which they ſeemed to have, and their ſouls looked no more

more like a watered garden, but a barren wilderneſs, or a dunghill covered with noyſome weeds, and the dam which religious education had erected, being broken down, the ſtream ran more violently; and it is not unuſual to ſee vice ſo much prevailing, that they turn perſecutors of what before they profeſt: oh my ſoul, is not this in part thy caſe? are there not ſenſible decays of love in thee? is not thy zeal for God abated, and thy courage in his cauſe decayed? are not thy graces choaked with weeds, and the wheat overrun with tares? where is the kindeneſs of thy youth, and the love of thy eſpouſalls, when thou wentſt after God in the wilderneſs? haſt thou not with the Church of *Epheſus*, *loſt thy firſt love*? doſt thou not grow more ſtrange with thy God, and doth not God grow more ſtrange with thee? where is that heart and fervour which did appear in thee? that life and activity in his ſervice? hath not the cooling winde of the world abated this? and thou beginneſt to be (as the world calls it) more moderate, or (as God calls it) more lukewarm, the weeds of ſin begin to overtop the hearb of grace; do not theſe grow rank and flouriſhing, when grace grows weak and feeble? grace like the houſe of *Saul* grows weaker and weaker, when ſin like the houſe of *David*

gathers

gathers ſtrength ; well , beware betimes ; if thou grow lukewarm , God will ſpew thee out of his mouth : if thou bear wilde grapes, he will pluck down thy fence, and lay thee waſte ; if thou art barren, he will cut thee down ; and caſt thee into the fire ; oh my God , without thy aſſiſtance I ſhall bring forth no fruit , or worſe then none , wilde grapes , grapes of ſin and diſobedience ; my ſins like a bloud-hound will dog me at the heels, and finde me out , the weeds of ſins and the thorns of cares will ſuffer no good herb nor flower to flouriſh , if God weed them not out : Oh , pluck up thoſe weeds , keep under thoſe thorns , and make up thoſe decays in this thy garden, *let the north-winde and the ſouth, blow upon my garden , that the ſpices thereof may flow out*, Cant. 4. 16. that I may be ſerviceable to thee , and profitable to man ; let my fruits be ripened, my graces greatned , by the breathing of the Holy Ghoſt, then ſhall I ſerve thee with thy own , and give thee of thy own ; 1 *Chron.*29. 14.

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*Upon the fading of Beautifull flowers.*

13. *Med.* WAlking in the garden, I fixed my eyes upon the flowers there growing ; I conſidered the variety, beauty,

beauty, and ſplendour of them; how glorious they appeared, after a cooling ſhower of rain, and the refreſhing beams of the ſhining Sun, how pleaſantly they lookt, how ſweet they ſmelt, filling the ambient air with their ſweet ſavour, delighting the beholders ſenſes with their colour, ſhape, and ſcent; and when on the other ſide, I conſidered how vain and fading all this glory was, how tranſitory theſe beautifull creatures were, and how their glory paſt was as the morning dew, which when the Sun in his glory appears, quickly vaniſheth; when I conſidered, that the ſame day I ſaw them in the heighth of their pride, and in their loweſt debaſement; *to day they are* (ſaith Chriſt) *and to morrow they are caſt into the oven*: the ſame day ofttimes ſees them both admired, and deſpiſed, hug'd in the boſome, and caſt out upon the dunghill; me thought this did lively reſemble the vanity of all humane felicity, how tranſitory it is and uncertain, and how little ſolidity is to be found in any thing under the ſun; Now they flatter, and ſeem beautifull to the eye, and ſuddenly they wither, vaniſh and diſappear: If we look upon their little Lord, and the owner of theſe things, we ſhall finde him as frail and brittle, as fading and tranſitory as theſe; this day you may ſee him in the ſtrength of his youth, and

his

his bones full of marrow, and to morrow death seizeth upon him, *and the worm sweetly feeds upon him*, Job. 24. 20. *they are cut down as the grass, and wither as the flower of the field*, Psal. 37. 12,13. How frequent is it in Scripture to compare man to grass, and to a fading flower? *Esay.* 40. 6, 7. *all flesh is grass, and the glory thereof as the flower of the field, the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass*, Psal. 92.7. *when the wicked springeth as the grass, and when the workers of iniquity flourish, it is that they may be out off for ever*; and as man is thus frail and brittle, fading and transitory, so are all these sublunary things; there is no stability, no sollidity in them, they are like the moon every day shewing a new face; now waxing, now waning; or like the Sea, sometimes ebbing, sometimes flowing; now a full sea, and a few howers after low water; we may see many men flourish like green bay-trees, and suddenly taken away, and the place that knew them shall know them no more; now in the height of honour, and suddenly in the gulph of disgrace; now flourishing in riches and quickly pincht with poverty, our age can witness all this; if our own Nation yielded not sufficient examples, we might pass over into *Ireland* for proof, where a hundred

thousand

thouſand were ſuddenly ſtript of all ; and for beauty, thoſe that have moſt gloried in it, in a ſhort time by a diſeaſe they have been deformed : ſo for friends, thoſe that love to day, do hate to morrow ; the like we may ſay of all earthly enjoyments : Oh my ſoul, if earthly delights, how pleaſing ſoever be ſo fading, and tranſitory, here thou ſeeſt thy folly, in ſpending ſo much of thy time in planting, pruning, fencing, and watering ſo fading a gourd, and ſo periſhing a plant, and contenting thy ſelf with a painted nothing: beauty is but skin-deep, and when the froſt of ſickneſs, or the winde of old age comes, it will wither ; death will equal the fair with the foul, the young with the aged : riches are no ſurer, *they take themſelves wings, and fly away* ; ſtrength will decay, and *Sampſon* himſelf cannot grapple with death ; honour is the emptieſt of bubbles ; and he that this day is aſcending the higheſt round of the ladder, of promotion, may ſuddenly break his neck in the fall, as *Haman* did : but there is a beauty which will never fade ; grace and holineſs will never change colour ; there are riches which will be certain, laid up where neither ruſt corrupteth nor theives can ſteal or plunder ; there are honours which will laſt to eternity ; pleaſures at Gods right hand, that never ſhall have

have end; there is meat that periſheth not, but endureth to eternal life; ſpend not thy time in ſeeking after theſe guilded nothings and painted vanities; Oh my God, beſtow theſe things upon me, that will do me good; theſe garments will adorn me, and make me beautiful in the eyes of God, and good men; this food will nouriſh my ſoul, and theſe riches will make me rich indeed; put me not off with ſuch trifles as the world affords, and with which the devil pleaſeth fools and franticks; the riches of Chriſt, the jewells of grace, the crown of glory, are worth wiſhing for, working for, ſuffering for, ſtriving, fighting, running, wraſtling, yea, dying for, when all other things are not worth the pains and ſweat which uſually are ſpent upon them: Lord, no portion but thy ſelf will ſatisfie, no husband but Chriſt will ſerve my turn, no pleaſure will pleaſe but thoſe at thy right hand, no jointure but a kingdom will content; Lord, give me theſe though thou take from me all the reſt.

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## *Upon Stones in the Garden.*

14. *Med.* OBſerving in the garden many ſtones mixt with other ſoil, and conſidering how uſeleſs, fruitleſs, and

unprofitable they were, yea though they had the ſame husbandry beſtowed upon them, the ſame ſun to ſhine upon them, and watered with the ſame ſhowers, though they had the ſame ſeed and labour, the ſame mucking and manuring, the ſame tilling and weeding, as the other ſoil had, yet were never the better, never the ſofter, or more pliable; they remained ſtones, ſtill fruitleſs and unprofitable; yea, though I broke them in pieces: I could neither mollify them, nor make them fruitfull, nor profitable, but they were hurtfull and pernicious to the place they were in; neither axe nor hammer, fire nor water could change their nature; neither fair means nor foul, the ſummers ſun, nor winters froſt could not change them, they were ſtill the ſame: hereupon I cauſed them to be gathered together and caſt out of the garden; to mend a foul way; and by this means that which before was a detriment now became a benefit; This Obſervation helpt me to this Meditation, it brought to my minde the nature of a ſtony heart; oh how lively do theſe ſtones repreſent this to us; the ſtony heart is of the nature of a ſtone, mercyes cannot melt it, judgements cannot break it; ſee this in *Pharaoh*, his heart after all the judgements continues ſtone ſtill, good ſeed ſown in a ſtony heart brings nothing

nothing to perfection, neither can it take any deep root, as we ſee in the parable of the ſtony grounds, they receive the word with joy, but have not root, and therefore ſoon wither; *they only taſte of the good word of God, Heb.* 6. 45. as cooks do of their ſauces (ſaith one) they let nothing down, they digeſt it not; this ground though never ſo carefully husbanded, even by Chriſt himſelf, the wiſeſt husbandman, yet brings no fruit to maturity; I have ſometimes wondred how wicked men could ſit under the powerful means of grace, and Miniſtry of the Word, and have hell-fire flaſht in their faces, and yet never ſtartle at it, though the ſame ſins which their conſciences know they are deeply guilty of, are again and again condemned to hell, and it be proved that thoſe that live in ſuch ſins ſhall never go to heaven; and the Chapters and verſes alledged where God doth ſentence ſuch ſinners to hell, and exclude them out of heaven, yet they remain as inſenſible as blocks, or ſtocks, or the ſtones they tread upon, or the ſeats they ſit upon, or the pillars they lean againſt; and what wonder is it that one ſtone ſhould be as inſenſible as another? And on the other ſide, when the melting promiſes of the Goſpel are preſt; and God, and Chriſt, and heaven, and happineſs, everlaſting pleaſures, and treaſures, glory and happineſs is offered, this makes

not ſo deep an impreſſion, as the offer of one ſhilling, nay, of one penny, will from a man: Doth not this plainly prove, that theſe mens hearts are ſenceleſs ſtones? Now it is the nature of ſome ſtones, fire will not melt them, water will not ſoften them, nothing will mollifie them; ſo it is of wicked men, neither mercies, nor judgements will work upon them; *Pharaoh* was ſuch a ſtone, nothing would work upon him, though he was broken to ſhivers, each piece retains its naturall hardneſs, it is ſtone ſtill, but ſuch ſtones that will not be fitted for Gods building; he will employ them otherwiſe, and make ſtepping-ſtones of them, God will not loſe by them; if they will not ſerve for one uſe, they ſhall for another. 'Tis true he hath a furnace, that can melt them, and happy is he that is caſt into it, if they miſs of that they ſhall be reſerved for the infernal furnace; where they ſhall always burn but never be conſumed, neither ſhall any of their droſs ever waſte; in the mean while as God made uſe of thorns (as before was noted) ſo can he of theſe ſtones, for the good of his Church; oh my ſoul, this was thy caſe, this was thy condition by nature, out of the ſame rock waſt thou hewn, and out of the ſame hole of the pit waſt thou digged; thy heart was as hard as the nether millſtone, and reſembled

reſembled the flinty rock, that would neither bend nor bow, and was as inſenſible of ſpirituall things, as the ſtones in the ſtreet, much water was ſpilt upon this rock, which could not be gotten up again; much waſhing was beſtowed to make this blackamore white, but all in vain; many a melting Sermon thou haſt heard, and didſt remain ſtone ſtill; how is the caſe at preſent with thee? what is thy preſent condition? hath God melted thee in his furnace? hath he changed thy nature? hath he faſhioned thee anew, and moulded thee into a better ſhape, and given thee a better form? hath he taken away the heart of ſtone, and given thee a heart of fleſh? hath he fitted thee for his own work? and hewn, and ſquared thee for his own building, to be united to Jeſus Chriſt the chief corner-ſtone? if ſo, bleſs God for it, for it was his own work, thou waſt not able to fit thy ſelf, nor all the Miniſters in *England* to help thee, had not God put his hand to the work; but if thou retain ſtill thy old inflexible nature, as hard and ſenſeleſs as ever, if thou be unpoliſhed, rough and craggy, notwithſtanding all the pains God hath beſtowed upon thee, after ſo much melting, and ſo much hewing, well maiſt thou fear thou wilt be caſt out amongſt the rubbiſh, as unfit for Gods uſe, and reſerved

ſerved for the fire of hell, which will neither refine thee, nor yet conſume thee; Oh my God, great pains and coſt thou haſt been at with me, but I have not anſwered thy pains, nor quit thy coſt; I remain ſtill rough and hard, notwithſtanding all the blows of thy workmen: but Lord, if thou wouldſt blow the fire, I ſhould melt, if thou wouldſt lay thy hand upon the workmans axe, I ſhould be ſquared and fitted for the work: Lord, rather lay great blows upon me, then ſuffer me to be unpoliſht, or caſt out into the rubbiſh; take away the heart of ſtone, give me a heart of fleſh, that I may melt at thy mercies, and tremble at thy judgements.

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*Upon worms in the garden.*

15. *Med.* WHen I was digging in the garden, I obſerved many worms and other inſects which divine providence had there diſpoſed to be fed and cheriſhed, but by what I know not: here, it is like, they had their birth, and firſt being, here they led their lives, and here (for ought I know) they will finiſh their courſe, and take their ends: I conſidered that the ſame providence that had appointed out my place and ſtation, where I ſhould

ſhould be born, where I ſhould leade my life, and where I ſhould end my dayes, had appointed, the like for them; and when I had ſpent ſome time in this Conſideration, what a poor miſerable piece man is, by what names or titles ſoever dignified or diſtinguiſhed, that is ſo near a kin to theſe deſpicable creatures, theſe ſilly helpleſs worms, they have the ſame father, and the ſame mother, and were made of the ſame matter, by the hand of the ſame workman, and were *made of duſt, and unto duſt they muſt return: we may ſay, to corruption, thou art my father, and to the worm, thou art my mother and my ſiſter, Job.* 17. 14. Holy *David*, a great man, both for worth and dignity, beloved of God, and King of *Iſrael*, yet remembers his original, and this made him humble, he cryes out *Pſal.* 22. 6. I am *a worm, and no man*; what then are we, poor ſhrubs, that we ſhould have high thoughts of our ſelves, or entertain a proud conceit of our own worth: we may finde in Scripture man is frequently call'd a worm, from the ſimilitude that is between us and them, being poor, helpleſs, ſhiftleſs creatures, *Job.* 25. 56. *Behold, even to the moon and it ſhineth not, and the ſtars, are not pure in his ſight, how much leſs man that is a worm, and the ſon of man which is a worm, Eſay.* 41. 14. *fear not thou worm Jacob, and*

*ye men of Iſrael, I will help thee*, &c. And truly as to the body, there is not much difference, but in the ſhape; they were made of the ſame matter, *digged out of the ſame hole of the pit*; were clay in the hand of the ſame potter, and ere long ſhall be reduced to their firſt original, and had God pleaſed, the man might have been the worm, and the worm the man; yea, the moſt of men have the very nature, and diſpoſition of worms; they moil, and toyl, and dig, and root in the earth, and bury themſelves in it, their affections grovell upon the ground, and aim at no higher an end, nor carry on no higher a deſigne then Scraping muck together, and minde no other happineſs but how to make proviſion for back and belly; fitly therefore do they bear the name of *muckworms*, and ere long they ſhall lodge together in the duſt, where man ſhall be made a feaſt for worms, *Job.* 24. 19. 20. *as drought and heat conſume the ſnow-waters, ſo doth the grave thoſe which have ſinned, the womb ſhall forget him, the worm ſhall feed ſweetly on him, he ſhall be no more remembred, Eſay.* 51. 8. *the moth ſhall eat them like a garment*, &c. this is the portion of poor man, from which grace it ſelf cannot exempt him: Holy *Job* was not free, *Job.* 19. 25. 26. *for I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon*

*the*

*the earth, and though after my skin worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God,* &c. Oh that this were well minded by our dainty dames, that now plaiſter and paint, and ſpot their faces, to take their prey, and ſpend their time in wanton dalliance, *and put far from them the evil day*; Oh that they would conſider, it is not long before they ſhall dance after deaths pipe, down to the chambers of darkneſs, where they muſt make their bed in the duſt, and the worms ſhall make their neſts between their breaſts; and eat out theſe wanton windows of love, and meſſengers of luſt: Oh what an humbling conſideration might this be, if well thought on, to thoſe that now ſcarce think the ground good enough to tread upon, and muſt not have the winde to blow upon them, or the ſun to ſee them; and go in an antick dreſs, and ſtudy how to pamper worms meat, and go like petty angels, little thinking, they are ſo near akin to poor deſpicable worms: Oh my ſoul, waſt thou as clay in the hand of the potter, and made of the ſame mold with this poor worm, bleſs God that hath made the difference, it was in his power to have made thee the worm, and this worm the man, then hadſt thou lain liable to be daſht by every foot; but God hath made thee a rational creature, capable

of

of Communion with himſelf, and enjoyment of him for ever; let the thoughts alſo of thy original, *duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return*, keep thee humble; have ſtill in thy minde the worm thy mother, and ſiſter: it is a ſin and ſhame for an angell to be proud, much more for a duſtheap, and one of theſe days, thou muſt make thy bed in the duſt, and *this earthly tabernacle will be diſſolved*; provide therefore a new habitation, *a houſe not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens?* Thou haſt a better part indewed with more noble faculties then theſe poor creatures have, which if not provided for, thou art a thouſand times in a worſe condition then they are; thou waſt made for an higher end, and fitted to do God better ſervice, but they never tranſgreſt their makers will nor Creators laws, as thou haſt done, and if thou art not regenerated and born again, thou hadſt better never have been born, or elſe made a dog, or toad, or poor crawling worm, whoſe miſery ends with life, when thine will begin at thy death; theſe ſerve God better in their kinde then thou haſt done; Oh my God, it was thy will there ſhould be a difference between me and theſe irrational creatures, thou haſt indewed me with more noble faculties, and didſt create me in thy own image, and madeſt me, Lord, over the work

work of thy hands; but oh how ſoon was this image loſt, and I diſabled for the work I was created for; I became as a loſt ſheep, *O ſeek thy ſervant, that I may be found:* I am the prodigal, incline my heart to come home to my fathers houſe; and open thy arms and heart to receive me; give me in thoſe qualifications that are neceſſary to thy ſervice, renew thine image in my ſoul, pardon my tranſgreſſions, and be favourable to my ſoul; mortifie my corruptions, then ſhall I be able to ſerve thee with chearfulneſs, and ſhall have occaſion to bleſe God that I was made a man, and not a worm.

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*Upon an heap of Ants or Piſmires.*

16. *Med.* FInding in the garden a heap of ants or piſmires, at the root of a tree, which I look't upon as no friends but enemies to an orchard, I diſturbed them with my foot, and they ſoon took the alarm, whereupon I took notice how theſe painful creatures behaved themſelves when thus diſturbed; they were all in a confuſion, ſome run this way, and ſome that, and no one knew where, or how to ſettle; and yet I obſerved every one laying hold of ſomething, and getting ſome burden upon his back, though he knew not where to bear

bear it, I thought this confuſion reſembled a beſeiged City, when taken by the enemy, or the Countrey when an enemy makes an incurſion, the inhabitants every one ſhifts for himſelf, one runs this way, another that, to ſave himſelf, and if it may be to ſecure his chiefeſt Jewels, or that which he moſt values; this minded me by the way, that it was a Chriſtians wiſdome in all the incurſions of ſatan, and the inroads and aſſaults he makes upon us, to ſecure the ſoul our chiefeſt Jewel, and not leave it unguarded at his mercy: this is our fort-royall, which if taken we are undone, but if ſafe, though he take the out-works, it matters not much, if the caſtle be ſecure: Let us ſtore this therefore with proviſion, and ammunition, againſt the aſſaults of this treacherous enemy. Again, this confuſed ſtir that thus happened among theſe poor inſects, repreſented to me the hurlyburly that is abaoad in the world, wherein are millions of men; every one driving on ſome particular deſigne, and yet go various ways to work; ſome purſue after riches, ſome honours and ſome pleaſures, and yet agree not on the way, nor on the means to attain their end: Thoſe that aim at riches, all tread not in the ſame ſteps, ſome go a more plain way then others do, and by labourious toiling, carking, care and pains,

ſeek

ſeek to get it, and are no ones foes but their own, in ſpending ſo much time upon it, that they neglect their greater concerns; others by more ſubtill, but leſs honeſt ſhifts, caſt their ground, and think to take their prey before their neighbours; theſe by lying, cheating, ſwearing, forſwearing, cozening, and circumventing, *make haſt to be rich, but cannot be innocent:* theſe ofttimes with the *Eagle* ſtealing meat from the altar, bring a coal with it, which fires their own neſts: ill-gotten goods ſeldome proſper, and the third heir ſeldome enjoys them; ſome in the purſuit of honour take the way of vertue, and hunt after it by deſert; but theſe are but few, yet this is the ſecureſt road: others endeavour to aſcend the ſteps of promotion by fawning, and flattery, and ſuch indirect courſes, but though theſe are the moſt by far, yet ofttimes they break their necks ere they come to the top of the ladder, and are always ſet in ſlippery places; the former way though leaſt trodden, and moſt painfull, is the ſureſt and ſafeſt; for honour follows virtue, as the ſhadow doth the ſubſtance: others that purſue pleaſure differ alſo, ſome ſeek after more innocent delights, others eſteem none worth enjoying, but what is the forbidden fruit, and deſperatly purſue ſuch pleaſures, that periſh ere they are budded, *and the end of that*

*mirth*

*mirth is heavineſs.* In a word, ſome are building caſtles in the air, and never live to finiſh them, others are getting goods, and know not who ſhall enjoy them; others are raking together by hook or by crook, and others are ſcattering abroad what is thus ſcraped together, and ſpend all, and know not who ſhall relieve them; ſome are promiſing themſelves content if they had a Lordſhip, others if they had a Dukedome, and ſome if they had a Kingdom, which if attained they are no nearer ſatisfaction, then before; and they are ſcarce warm in their places, but death with a daſh with his foot, breaks the pitcher, and ſpoils the ſport, and ſtrips him of that in an hour, that he hath been projecting for all his life: and thus you ſee there is a confuſed hurly-burly in the world, every man driving on his own deſignes, and God all this while tacitly by this, is a carrying on his deſignes, perhaps quite contrary to theirs. Or this tumultuous confuſion amongſt theſe little creatures may reſemble a crowd in a market or fair, ſome ruſh this way, ſome that, that he that ſtands at a diſtance, and obſerves their motion, thinks it is a confuſion, yet every man is carrying on ſome deſigne or other, and moves accordingly. Oh my ſoul, loſe not thy ſelf, thy pains, thy precious time, as many do, in ſeeking

honey

honey in a waſps neſt, or that in the world which no man was ever yet able to finde there; content, ſatisfaction, and happineſs; theſe are not ſown in the furrows of thy field, and therefore are not to be found in full bags, and barns; content grows not in natures garden, and thoſe that ſeek happineſs beneath the moon, are miſtaken; the enjoyment of God in glory is our compleat happineſs, and nothing elſe will give the ſoul content, let the world ſay what it will to the contrary: carking cares, and fretting fears, and Jealouſies about earthly enjoyments, are ſo far from being the way to it, that it choaks the word which is the means to attain it: the riches, honours and pleaſures the world affords, which are the worlds Deity, whereupon moſt men doat, as much as the *Epheſians* did upon *Diana's* Temple, bear no more proportion to true riches, true pleaſures, and true honours, then painted fire on the wall to true fire, or a King upon a Stage, to a King upon the throne, they only bear an empty name, and notion; thoſe that purſue them will finde their miſtake, and that they were not worth their time and pains, and cark and care, eſpecially their ſouls, which are like to be loſt into the bargain; but God and Chriſt, and heaven and glory, are worth our labour; we cannot buy this gold

to

to dear. : Oh my God, this hath been my folly, to hunt after theſe butterflys, and neglect the race, where a crown of glory was to be the prize, and my own ſoul lay at the ſtake ; *I have laid out my money for that which is not bread, and my labour for that which ſatisfyeth not :* I have been one of theſe buſy creatures, that have made a great and confuſed buſtle in the world, to little purpoſe : help me now to devote my ſelf to thy ſervice, and give up not only my name, but my heart to Chriſt, then may I expect a better reward, then the world hath given me, and better happineſs then the creatures can afford.

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*Upon the Diligence of the ants.*

17. *Med.* UPon the former occaſion, when I had ( as before was noted ) diſturbed the ants, and put them into a confuſion, I obſerved what would be the iſſue, and ſaw when the preſent fear, and amazement was a little over, which put them into that diſorder, they unanimouſly with a joint conſent, applyed themſelves, with might and main, to order what I had diſordered with my foot, and to repair the breaches I had made in their Caſtle or ſtrong-hold, every one laying hold

of

of ſomething, and carrying it to the common heap; methought, they did reſemble a well ordered, well governed commonwealth, where the whole community joyn heart and hand for the common intereſt, and lay out their ſtrength for the publick benefit; but alaſs! where is there ſuch a government, ſuch a ſociety to be found? what a happy thing were it to ſee the inhabitants of a Nation, of a City, of a Town, or Village, to have publike ſpirits, and every one to concern himſelf in the concerns of the whole, and unanimouſly minde the publique good, as well as their own private concerns: but alaſs! it is far otherwiſe, both in Nation, Town and Countrey, yea, publike perſons, that are in Authority, and to whom the welfare of the reſt is intruſted, too many of them have low baſe private ſpirits, and will go no further then their own private intereſt, gain, and advantage drives them; yea, if Chriſtians that make more then ordinary profeſſion of religion, were of publike ſpirits, and would ſympathize with each other, in weal or wo, and put to a helping-hand, and a willing-heart, and watch over each other, and aſſiſt one the other, upon all occaſions, and exigencies, for ſoul and for body, what a growing, thriving, ſweet communion would there be? the *Pſalmiſt* tels us, *Pſal.*

133. 1. *behold, how good, and how pleaſant it is, for men to dwell together in unity? it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down to the beard*, &c. yea, *like the dew of hermon, and the dew that deſcendeth upon the mountains of* Zion, *&c.* but ſuch unity is more to be wiſht for, then hoped for, in our days, wherein Chriſtians rather worry one another, then help and aſſiſt. The dilligence and induſtry of theſe poor creatures alſo brought to my minde the counſel of *Solomon* to the ſluggard, and oh that I could ſpeak it loud enough to my ſelf and others that are guilty, *Pro. 6. 6. go to the ant thou ſluggard, conſider her ways and be wiſe, which hath no guide, overſeer, nor ruler, yet provideth her meat in the ſummer, and gathereth her food in the harveſt.* The Naturaliſts and others have written much of the induſtry of theſe creatures, not only that they gather their ſtore, but alſo draw it forth (ſay ſome) in a ſun-ſhine day, to dry it, to keep it from putrefaction: Theſe inſects are (as one calls them) *veri Laicorum libri*, the true Lay-mans books, wherein they may learn their duty: Oh man, how art thou degenerated, that waſt made but a little lower then the angels, and waſt indued with reaſon to rule theſe inferiour Creatures, and not only, *ad laborem natus, ſed & rationi ornatus*; and yet now muſt be ſent to learn wiſdom, not only *from the*

*the oxe and the asse*, *Isay.* 1.3. not only from *the stork*, *the turtle*, *the crane*, and *the swallow*, *Jer.*8.1. but down to the lowest form, the poorest insects, the most despicable of all others, and that to learn wisedom and diligence; these by an instinct of nature gather their food in summer for winter; and shall man that hath reason to foresee the danger be careless? But how many, oh too many, (as if they had forgot that God had said, *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread*, Gen.3.19.) live idly and cannot give account of one days work in a moneth; of this sort are many of our Gentry, that eat and drink, and rise up to play; but God never gave them their parts, and their Estates for this end, and an account will be required at the last, and they will know that they were not the only proprietors of what they enjoy, but the Stewards: But there are others no less faulty, perhaps more guilty, and those are our idle drones, that make begging their calling, and follow no other employment though they are able; those that content themselves, *in diem vivere*, as the fowls of the air do; and some are not only idle, but prodigall also, and spend and consume that wastefully, that might refresh their family handsomly; but (as one saith) care should be taken, *ne promus sit fortior condo*, that our layings out be not more then our layings up: But the greatest

ſlothfulneſs is in reference to the ſoul, how ſtrangely negligent are the moſt of men, though God rain *manna* about their tents, yet will they not gather it, but ſuffer the ſoul to ſtarve; they are like the fooliſh Virgins, they ſeek not for oyl, till their lamps are out, and the bridegroom be come; or like the wicked ſervant, bury their talents in a Napkin: Oh my ſoul, thou haſt a leſſon for thy inſtruction, or an example for thy imitation: theſe poor, yet diligent creatures juſtly reprove thee for ſloth and negligence; many of thy years are paſt, and little of thy work is done, thou haſt been playing in the duſt, and though called, neglected to come home to thy fathers houſe; thou haſt trifled out the morning, and now *the ſhadows of the evening are ſtretched out*, and the day far ſpent: beware of idleneſs, this will leave thee ſhort of heaven; double thy diligence, and amend thy pace; *give diligence to make thy calling and election ſure*; be diligent in Gods work, that when the devil comes to tempt, he may finde thee well employed; when Chriſt comes to judge thee, he may not finde thee idle; when death comes to call, thou maiſt be ready; when the bridegroom comes, thou maiſt have oil in thy veſſel, and a lamp ready trimmed in thy hand, and a wedding-garment on thy back; improve thy talents well, that Chriſt may ſay, well done, good

good and faithfull ſervant, enter into thy Maſters joy; when others only wiſh for heaven, do thou work for it: Oh my God, I have been one of theſe loitering truants, that am juſtly here reproved, and ſent again to ſchool to the meaneſt of thy creatures, their diligence ſhames my negligence, they have only an inſtinct of nature to guide them, I have reaſon, experience, Scripture, and example to put me on; they labour only for the body, I for the ſoul and body; they for the meat that periſheth, I for that which endureth to eternall life, they for a winter, I for eternity, yet are they diligent, and I negligent; Heaven and earth may ſtand amazed at my folly; Lord, pardon what is paſt, and incline my heart for the time to come, *to give diligence to make my calling and election ſure; Let me ſo run, that I may obtain; ſo fight, that I may conquer; and be faithfull to the death, that I may receive the crown of life.*

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*Upon the gorgeous dreſſe of Flowers.*

18. *Med.* WHen I ſeriouſly conſidered the various dreſs, the curious colours of the herbs and flowers which diapred the plot, I took ſome delight to conſider the power of God in them, and how far he condeſcended to pleaſe our fancies, and delight

our ſences, when I ſaw how gorgeouſly they were attired, how beautiful they appeared, it led me up to the fountain-head, even to God who is beauty and comelineſs it ſelf; and the greateſt beauty that the world can brag of, is but a ſpark to this fire, a ray to this Sun, and a drop to this ocean; if the creature can be ſo beautiful, what is the Creator, end if earth be ſo pleaſant, what is heaven? but when I conſidered alſo the tranſitory, fading nature of theſe ſhort-lived flowers, how ſoon, when they were in their prime, they withered away and periſhed, this put me in minde of the vanity of man which is compared *to a flower, which cometh up, and is cut down like a flower, and never continueth in one ſtay*, and not only he but all earthly enjoyments are ſhort-lived, and ſoon periſh: But when I conſidered their beauty with their fading nature, it minded me of our Saviours words, Mat. 6. 28. *&c. Why take you thought for raiment? conſider the lillies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they ſpin, and yet I ſay unto you, that even* Solomon *in all his glory is not arayed like one of theſe; wherefore if God ſo clothe the graſs of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is caſt into the oven, ſhall he not much more clothe ye? O ye of little faith, &c.* he ſends us in the former verſes to the ſparrows, which though they neither plongh, nor ſow, reap nor mow,

nor

nor carry into barns, are yet fed by divine providence; ſo here he ſends to the graſs and flowers, who though frail vaniſhing things, are gorgeouſly attired by him, and all is to put us on to depend upon our fathers providence; for the force of the argument is thus; If God feed theſe worthleſs ſparrows, and *not one falls to the ground without his providence*, and ſo clothe the withering graſs, in ſuch a dreſs, doubtleſs he will not ſuffer his ſons and ſervants to want neceſſary food and rayment, which as they are better, ſo are a thouſand times dearer to him then the fowls or flowers: There is in every man by nature a conceit of ſelf-ſufficiency, as if by our own diligenee we could provide for our ſelves; and are ready to undertake Gods part of the work: Now this ſelf-confidence is the daughter of unbelief (as one ſaith), is the mother of carking care and carnal thoughtfullneſs: Our Saviour here by many arguments diſſwades us from theſe; there is a care of the head, not only lawfull but commendable, but there is a carking, diſtruſtfull, diffident care of the heart here condemned; when a man hath done his utmoſt endeavour in the uſe of lawfull means, yet vexeth himſelf about the event; what if this or that follow? I fear I ſhall die a beggar, *&c. One day* (ſaith *David*) *I ſhall periſh by the hand of Saul*:

What shall I eat, or what shall I drink? *&c.* because God will not let us know how we shall be provided for, therefore we are ready with *Israel* to question, *Can God provide a table in the wilderness?* Psa. 78. 19. Oh my soul; how justly art thou reproved, and sent to these poor creatures to school? hast thou not had distracting thoughts and distrustfull fears? hast thou not oft been questioning, *What shall I eat, or what shall I drink, or wherewithall shall I be cloathed?* what shall become of my wife and children when I am dead? *&c.* even contrary to the express command of the great God; as if thou hadst had no father to provide for thee, or no God to depend upon, or no promise to uphold thee, and though God hath oftimes silenced thy fears, and husht thy cares by an unexpected providence, yet upon the apprehension of new danger, new fears arise, like murmuring *Israel*, though they had seen Gods wonders in *Egypt*, at the Red Sea, in feeding them with *Manna*, yet cry out, *Can he furnish a table for us in the wilderness? Psal.* 78. 19. yea, though thou hast never wanted food, nor rayment nor any thing truly necessary, and hast a promise, thou shalt never want any thing that is good, and though God hath bid, *leave your fatherless children with me, and let thy widdows trust in me*, yet how

hard

hard is it to commit wife and children to him, if there be no viſible means for their ſubſiſtance, or to truſt him when means are out of ſight, and the world doth not paſs for payment; what if thy food be not ſo dainty, nor thy cloathes ſo fine, if the one nouriſh thee, and the other keep thee warm, it matters not: if thou do not fare deliciouſly every day, nor go in purple and fine linnen, thy betters have fared harder, and gone more meanly clad, reade *Heb.*11.36. and be aſhamed of murmuring, *others had trials of cruel mocking, and ſcourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and impriſonments, they were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the ſword, they wandred about in ſheeps-skins and goats-skins, being deſtitute, afflicted, and tormented, of whom the world was not worthy; they wandred in deſarts and in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth:* what if thou haſt no certain dwelling-houſe, thy dear redeemer had not where to lay his head, and thoſe Worthys were worſe beſtead then ever thou waſt: Oh my God, charge not upon me thoſe diſtruſtful thoughts, but ſtrengthen my faith in thy promiſes: *Lord I believe, help my unbelief*; and let not this ſin have dominion over me: Enable me to ſay with *Job*, *though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him*, and with *Ely*, *'tis the Lord, let him do what*

*ſeemeth*

*ſeemeth him good*; and with *Paul, I am ready not only to be bound, but to die for Chriſt.*

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*Upon a Garden ſpoiled through bad fence.*

19. *Med.* WHen through bad fence, careleſly heeded, my garden was much ſpoiled, and waſted by ſwine, and other cattle, ſome cropping off the heads of tender buds and plants, ſome rooting up both root and branch, and alſo by their treading of it, much defaced the beauty of it, and that which even now ſeemed pleaſant, and amiable, ſuddenly ſeemed a rude indigeſted and deformed piece, ſo that not without much labour, pains and care, I ſecured the fence, made up the breaches, and all I could do, could not at preſent bring it to its former eſtate, and priſtine beauty; all which injury might have been prevented with a little foreſight, and painstaking: how much better is it to prevent an injury, then remedy it, to prevent a diſeaſe then repell it; to keep out an enemy then drive him out? the cockatrice-egg is better broken while it is an egg, then deſtroyed when it is a ſerpent: ſin is better deſtroyed in the bud, then when it is ripe: The injury ſuſtained in my garden, was ſomething requited by this following Meditation:

tation : If a garden, a ſmall plot of ground, cannot be preſerved from danger, without care, and pains-taking, without a good fence about it, and an needfull eye upon it, becauſe it hath ſo many enemies, how then can the ſoul, a more curious garden, which is in a thouſand times greater danger, be kept ſafe without a fence, and watchful guard ? here are more choiſe herbs and flowers then the other hath, of greater worth, beauty and vertue, more ſubject to injury, ſpoil and rapine, and theſe have greater, ſubtiller, and more malicious enemies that ſeek their deſtruction: the devil and his inſtruments, *who goes about like a roaring Lion, ſeeking whom he may devour*, 2 *Pet.* 5. 8. if he finde the fence down, or the watch neglected, and the watchman either aſleep or careleſs, he will enter, deſtroy, and waſte ; he envies our condition, that we ſhould enjoy that paradice that he left, the comforts he once had ; he hath a ſpite and hatred againſt God and goodneſs, and oppoſes his image wherever he ſees it ; this is the *wilde boar out of the wood, and the wilde beaſt out of the forreſt that doth devour it*, *Pſal.* 80. 30. The devil and the world beſiege the fort of our ſouls ; and our own heart, that inbred traitour, watches to ſurrender it into his hands ; a thouſand ſnares, and nets are ſpread for this turtle,

and

and ſhe is in continual danger, in every calling, in every condition, in every relation, in every creature we have to do with; in every duty; nay, in every action, ſome ſnare or other is laid to intrap us in youth, and old age, in ſickneſs and health, in proſperity and adverſity, in honour and diſgrace, all have their peculiar ſnares; our neareſt relations, oft times betray us into his hands: thus *Eve* betrays *Adam*; thus *Jobs* wife would have betrayed him; thus *Lots* daughters betrayed him; and *Peter* would have betrayed *Chriſt* himſelf; *get thee behinde me ſatan, Mat.* 26. 23. he did his good will to hinder him in the courſe of his calling; we may many times diſcry a devil in our neareſt friends, he ſpeaks to us by them; we have enemies without, and enemies within, and many ſnares are laid for our feet; how warily then have we need to walk; many are the *foxes that deſtroy theſe vines, Cant.* 2. 15. what care then need we to have of our ſouls when they are in ſo continuall danger, and ſo many ſnares laid for our feet, temptation without, and corruption within, ofttimes prevail againſt us, and we are ſnared by it: oh my ſoul, haſt thou ſo bloudy, and bloudy-thirſty an enemy to deal with, that is ſo malicious, ſo crafty, and politick: haſt thou ſo ſtrong and potent an enemy to deal with, that

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ſeeks thy ruine, and makes it his buſineſs to undo thee; oh what need then haſt thou to ſtand upon thy guard; if thou fall into his hands nothing but the everlaſting deſtruction of body and ſoul will ſatisfie him: quit thy ſelf therefore like a man, ſtand upon thy guard, *reſiſt the devil and he will fly from thee*: there is none but theſe throw down their weapon, and quit the field, that are vanquiſht by him; though others may be foiled: look to the main fort, the heart, if that be ſurprized thou art undone; lay in proviſion and ammunition there, for a ſiege; watch the five cinque-ports, the ſenſes, for oft times he ſails in with the tide; *make a covenant with thy eyes*; take heed to thy ears and other ſenſes; examine every paſſenger that comes in, leſt he prove treacherous, and every one that goes forth: to this end, *ſet a watch over thy mouth, that thou offend not with thy tongue; get on the whole armour of God*, mentioned *Eph.* 6. 11, 12, 13. *the ſword of the ſpirit, and the darts of prayer*, are prevalent; thou art to fight with *principalities and powers*, theſe contended with the angell, for *Moſes* his body, but with thee for thy precious ſoul; no peace can be had with him, no truce can be obtained, but upon the condition of the everlaſting deſtruction of ſoul and body; whatever his promiſes are, hell will be his wages;

wages, a thouſand thouſand have been deceived by him, that took his word, look to thy affections, that they ſtraggle not, leſt like *Dinah* they be raviſhed by him; ſtand faſt, and thou wilt prevail, call in thy captain Chriſt to thine aſſiſtance, ſo ſhalt thou be the victor, *and if thou overcome thou ſhalt reign with Chriſt:* Oh my God, be thou my defender, I have no ſtrength againſt theſe potent enemies, neither know I what to do, only my eyes are up unto thee, *O let no cruel beaſt devour thy turtle that is true;* do thou watch over me or I ſhall wake in vain, teach me the uſe of the Chriſtian armour, rebuke the tempter, and chain him up, that he may not hurt me, keep me under the ſhadow of thy wings, hide me in the hollow of thy hand, preſerve me from the rage of this bloud-thirſty enemy, and keep me out of the ſnares that are laid for my feet, then ſhall I praiſe thee with an upright heart, and tell what God hath done for my ſoul.

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*Upon a Mole ſpoiling the garden.*

20. *Med.* WHen I had thus fenced my garden, and ſecured it, as I thought, from the injury of all enemies that were viſible, and began to wax ſecure and careleſs, as if out of the reach of danger;

ger; behold, an inbred traitor, an unſeen and unexpected enemy, did me no little injury; a diſpicable creature, blinde as is reported, yet was the occaſion to me of no ſmall trouble; a poor contemptible *Mole*, ere I was aware, digged, and rooted up my herbs, and flowers, diſordered my work, and ſpoiled the beauty of it; and proved ſuch an enemy then, when ſhe was deſcried, I knew not which way to fence for her, and for a conſiderable time knew not how to take her priſoner, nor make her pay for the treſpaſs; this unexpected accident made me conſider, of the vanity of all humane felicity, how ſoon the beauty of it may vaniſh and come to nothing, and by how ſmall a means God can blaſt all earthly enjoyments. All that the world affords is of the nature of *Jonahs* gourd, *that grew up in a night, and periſhed in a night*: no ſolidity to be found in any ſublunary creatures; ſome worm or other breeds in it, that eats out the very heart of it, and makes it wither and die, and when we have the greateſt expectations, we meet with the greateſt diſappointments; and when we think we are moſt ſure, many times we are in moſt danger; and when we think to gripe it faſteſt, we are likelieſt to loſe it; I conſidered, how fooliſh men were to promiſe themſelves ſecurity

curity in their enjoyments, when they apprehend no danger in ſight, for *if our ways pleaſe God, he can make our enemies, yea, the ſtones of the field at peace with us*: but if we pleaſe not God, he can raiſe us enemies enow to diſturb our peace: *David*, a good man, yet offending God had his own familiar friend *Achitophel*, nay, his own ſon *Abſalom*, that ſought his ruine; yea, the pooreſt vermine are ſometimes a ſcourge to the proudeſt tirant; frogs, and lice, and flyes, and locuſts, make proud *Pharaoh* ſtoop to God, that before had proudly ſaid, *who is the Lord, that I ſhould obey him? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Iſrael go*; *Exod.* 5. 2. but God made himſelf known to him by his judgements and compelled him to ſay, *the Lord is righteous, and I, and my people are wicked*; yea, he hath made caterpillars, cankerworms, palmerworms, and ſuch like, which God calleth, *his great army*, *Joel.* 1. 2. *&c.* a ſcourge to potent princes, and can deſtroy the greateſt monarch on earth, by theſe poor inſects; how little truſt then ſhould we put in earthly comforts, when God can ſo eaſily imbitter them to us; and how dangerous it is by our ſins to provoke God, to leave us and to puniſh us, he can eaſily do it, he need not raiſe many againſt us; no ſingle creature, no fly, no flea, nor graſs-pile, nor hair, but if it

have

have a Commiſſion from God, will be our bane: Inſtances of this may eaſily be given; nay, if *he withhold our breath, we return to our duſt, and all our thoughts periſh*; and for our enjoyments, he can make a worm breed in them, that ſhall eat out the very heart of them; and can imbitter that which we eſteem our ſweeteſt comforts; If theſe earthly enjoyments are vain, and periſhing like their owners, what need have we to make preparation of ſome thing that is more durable, and more certain, which may bear ſome proportion to our immortal ſouls, we can have no abiding city here, but affliction and vanity will attend us, in all places; for if ſin go before, affliction will follow after, as the effect follows the cauſe, or the ſhadow the ſubſtance. Now if theſe our earthly enjoyments are in ſuch continual danger, and have enemies, without, within, above, beneath, and on every ſide, the ſoul is in much more danger, having more potent, ſubtill, cruel, and malicious enemies; how watchfull then ought we to be, leſt theſe chiefeſt Jewels, our immortal ſouls ſhould be bloudily butchered, or inhumanely treated: what care, what providence ſhould we uſe, that we be not made a prey to infernal furies? and what need have we to invoke God to be our guardian, our defender, and our watch-

man? Oh my ſoul, here is a check for thy folly, that haſt overeagerly graſped after theſe vanities, and ſought content where it was not to be had; take heed to thy ſelf, this will not ſerve thy turn; a few days, and thou wilt be ſtript of all: there are better pleaſures, truer treaſures to be had; there is a worm in theſe will eat out their very heart, there is vanity writ upon them; they are but *Egyptian* reeds, and will break in thy hand: *curſed is the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm; and whoſe heart departeth from the living God; if thou love the world the love of the father is not in thee*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. Uſe it we may, as a traveller doth his ſtaff, which he keeps or throws away, according as it helps, or hinders him in his journey; theſe worldly things are tranſitory, and there is a vanity writ upon them; but there are riches durable as the days of heaven, and run paralell with the life of God, or the lines of eternity: theſe are worth ſcrambling for; they are laid up now, and may be drawn forth a thouſand years hence; theſe our enjoyments are liable to vanity and violence; when we graſp them hardeſt, they prick us moſt; and when we embrace them they vaniſh into ſmoke, which may wring tears from our eyes but never ſorrow from our hearts; when others therefore lay hold upon riches,

riches, do thou lay hold upon eternal life, 1 *Timoth.* 6. 12. lay hold upon that pearl in the Goſpel, though thou let all things elſe go; for nothing elſe is worth having; this will make thee rich to God: the time is ſhort, thy race is long, ſtand not ſtill to pick up ſticks, and ſtraws, nor leave thy way to catch butter-flyes; up and be doing; let heaven be thy object, and the earth will be thy abject: oh my God, pardon my former folly, that I have ſpent ſo much time to ſo little purpoſe, and made no more haſte to my journeys end, that I have loſt my way, miſtaken my happineſs, and laboured ſo long in vain; draw up my affections, O Lord, from earth to heaven, and let me be as zealous for heaven, as ever I have been for earth, and take as much pains for my ſoul, as ever I have done for my body.

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*Upon the ſpringing up of the ſeed.*

11. *Med.* WHen I had digged the garden, and ſowed the ſeed, in convenient time, I obſerved the ſpringing of them up, and after a while I obſerved how freſh and fragrant that looked, that a little before ſeemed dead, and rotten, among the clods; this minded me of the

mighty power of God, that could of a ſmall ſeed, ſeemingly dead, and buried, and rotten in the earth, raiſe up ſo great, ſo flouriſhing an hearb or flower, indewed with ſuch beauty, and excellent vertue, yea ſo great, ſo mighty a tree: I conſidered how ſmall a matter I did or could confer to them; I only diſpoſed them where I would have them grow, but no skill, nor art, nor labour, nor induſtry of mine could make them grow; the earth hath a natural propenſity to receive them, the heavens powred out their influence upon them, which through Gods bleſſing cooperating became effectuall, 'tis God alone muſt do the work, or it will not be done, 'tis he *that gives to every ſeed his own body*, and put life into that which hath no life, all the skill, induſtry, and pains which the husbandman can uſe, cannot make one ſeed fructify, or one corn grow, if God ſucceed not their endeavour: oh the madneſs, ſtupidity, and egregious folly of *Athieſts*, that deny a diety, and yet cannot make a fly or flea, or the leaf of a tree, without pre-exiſtent matter, nor put life into it when it is made, nor know how it is done; but many of them, their lives are ſo debaucht, that to ſtill and quiet their inraged conſcience, they would fain race out, and obliterate this principle imprinted in the ſoul

ſoul by God himſelf, *viz.* that there is a God, but that there is no God they rather wiſh then believe; but to return, it is God that doth this work, *Mark.* 4. 26. *The Kingdom of heaven, is as if a man ſhould caſt ſeed into the ground, and ſhould ſleep, and riſe night and day, and the ſeed ſhould ſpring up, and grow up he knows not how; for the earth bringeth forth fruit of her ſelf, firſt the blade, then the ear, afterwards the full corn in the ear,* &c. when we have done our duties, we muſt rely upon God for the ſucceſs, and depend upon Gods providence; if we cannot do it, leave it to him that can; let us do our part of the work, and leave his part to him to do; we cannot do his, and he will not do ours; it is our part to plow, and ſow, and manure, and *till the ground out of which we were taken, Gen.* 2. 15. but it is God that cauſeth it to fructifie and encreaſe; *he giveth us rain from heaven, and fruitfull ſeaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs, Acts.* 14. 17. Diligence is our duty, as the bleſſing upon it is his gift; God placed no man upon the earth, as he did *Leviathan* in the ſea, only to play therein, but we are to work, either with hand or head, the thing that is good, *and in the ſweat of our brow or brain we ſhould eat our bread*: but when we have done all we muſt look higher for a bleſſing, *Deut.* 28. 12. *the Lord ſhall open to thee his good*

*treaſure, the heaven to give the rain unto the land in his ſeaſon, and to bleſs all the work of thy hand.* The ſtars are Gods ſtore-houſes, which he opens for our profit, and cauſeth them to pour out their influences upon the earth, and thereby he ſcatters his riches to the world: If we will cark and care about the event of things, when we have done our endeavour, no wonder if we faint under the burden; if we take his part of the work upon us alſo, no wonder if we truckle under it. Now if his bleſſing be ſo neceſſary in temporals, it is much more neceſſary in ſpirituals, for none can make the ſoul fruitful but God: do we not oft ſee the ſeed ſown by the ſame hand, and that it is watered by the ſame word; yet it thrives in one field, and not in another; in one heart, and not another; why? *God cauſeth it to rain upon one field, and not another; and the field it raineth not on, withered*; Amos. 4. 7. thoſe that live under the ſame Miniſtry, ſit in the ſame ſeat, and have the ſame husbandry, one remains barren, the other fruitfull, what is the cauſe? *but the north-wind, and the ſouth-wind*; the pleaſant gales of the ſpirit blow upon one garden, and not upon the other, *Cant.* 4. 16. when Chriſt was the preacher, that which workt upon *Peter* workt not upon *Judas*, not being made effectuall by God. The ſpringing of the ſeed alſo

alſo put me in minde of the reſurrection; the *Apoſtle* we finde illuſtrateth that point by this ſimilitude, 1 *Cor.*15.35,36,37. *but ſome will ſay, how are the dead raiſed up? and with what body do they come? thou fool, that which thou ſoweſt, is not quickned, except it die; and that which thou ſoweſt, thou ſoweſt not that body that ſhall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of ſome other grain, but God hath given it a body as it hath pleaſed him, to every ſeed his own body:* the rotting of the body, is but as the rotting of the ſeed in the ground, that it may ſpring forth again with more vigour: if God can ſay to this dead ſeed, as ſometime *to the dry bones, live,* why can he not ſay ſo to our dead bodies? Is any thing too hard for the Almighty? he that made them at the firſt of nothing, can we imagine he cannot gather again together our ſcattered aſhes, and make it again into a body? ſhall we think that to be impoſſible to God, that ſeems hard to us? if he ſay, it ſhall be done, ſhall we conclude it cannot be done; Oh my ſoul, uſe diligence, both in thy general and particular calling, but when thou haſt done thy endeavour, leave the ſucceſs to God, and not carkingly care, nor doubtingly trouble thy ſelf about the event; and diſquiet not thy ſelf, at what thou canſt not help, take not his work in hand, leſt thou canſt not fi-

niſh it: leave not thy work undone, for he will not do it, diligence is thy duty, yet promiſe not ſucceſs to thy endeavours, but depend upon him for a bleſſing; if he give it bleſs him for it, and let it more engage thy heart in his ſervice: if he deny it, murmure not, but wiſely ſearch out what was the cauſe, ſome ſin or other is pointed at in the ſuffering: if thou finde it out, remove the *Achan*, and bleſs God for the providence, it is better have a reformed heart, then a full barn, and as for ſpiritualls uſe diligence in the duties required, but reſt not in the work done, if a bleſſing ſucceed, let the Lord have his homage paid; if that thou ſtand at a ſtay it is a ſigne ſome obſtruction is between the head and heart that hinders the work, reſt not till it be removed; if thou meet God in his ordinance, bleſs his name for it; if he abſent himſelf, let no duty pleaſe thee; reſt not till thou haſt recovered ſight of him: as for the reſurrection, call not that to queſtion, which is ſo clearly held forth in his word, *heaven and earth ſhall paſs, but his word ſhall not paſs, till it be fulfilled*: what is too hard for an omnipotent arm? he that made all things of nothing, and he that every year raiſeth a crop from dead ſeed, why ſhould we think it impoſſible for him to gather together our aſhes, how-

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ever ſcattered, and raiſe again our dead bodies to life? it is thy great concern to live holily, that thou mayſt die happily, and live with God eternally. Oh my God, enable me to commit all my concerns for ſoul and for body to thee; and let me not murmure under any dark diſpenſation of providence; however thou deal with me in reference to the body, or theſe worldly enjoyments, yet deal well with me in reference to my ſoul, and in reference to eternity; let the ſeed of grace grow and flouriſh, let the weeds of ſin be rooted out, and let my ſoul, like the good ground, *bring forth an hundred fold, then ſhall I glorify thee when I bring forth much fruit.*

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*Upon a ſudden Drought.*

22. *Med.* WHen I had digged, manured, ſown and fenced my garden, and done what lay in me to do, and began from the hopefull ſpringing up of the ſeed, to have comfortable hopes of a plentifull encreaſe, and began to rejoyce in the works of my hands, behold an unexpected judgement fell upon it, for God withheld the ſhowers of rain and reſtrain'd the influence of heaven, and cauſed that it ſhould not rain upon the earth, and the clouds

clouds which were wont to drop fatneſs, and by which God was uſed to open his treaſure, and to give a bleſſing to his people, *Deut.* 28. 12. now proved empty clouds, promiſing much, but paying nothing; hereupon the earth languiſhed, and could not nouriſh what ſhe had brought forth; for though ſhe had not a miſcarrying womb, yet had ſhe dry breaſts; ſo that hearbs and flowers, yea, the graſs of the field languiſhed, hanged down the head, withered and died, and their beauty faded away, as mans will if he want food; as we may ſee, *Lam.* 4. 7, 8. *Her Nazarites were purer then ſnow, they were whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in body then rubies, their poliſhing was of ſaphire, their viſage is blacker then a coal, they are not known in the ſtreet, their ſkin cleaveth to their bones, it is withered, and is become like a ſtick,* &c. This providence made me conſider, how vain and fruitleſs all our endeavours are, either for this life or that to come, if God ſucceed them not with his bleſſing; and that all the men that live upon the face of the earth, had they joined with their united counſels, with policy and power, they could not have removed this judgement, had they taken in all the gods of the heathens to aſſiſt them: *Can any of the vanities of the gentiles give rain? Jer.* 14. 22. *it is*

*in*

*in vain to hope for ſalvation from the hills, or from the mountains, in the Lord our God is the ſalvation of Iſrael.* When God blows upon our creature-comforts, they vaniſh, and prove unſatisfying, *Haggai.* 1. 9. *ye looked for much, and lo it came to little, and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it,* &c. *ye have ſown much, and, bring in little, ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink but you are not filled with drink; ye cloath you, but there is none warm, and he that earneth wages putteth it into a bag with holes, ver.* 6. the earth cannot bring forth without the influence of heaven and theſe cannot be had without a commiſſion from God, *Jer.* 14. 22. *Can the heavens give ſhowers? art not thou he O Lord our God? therefore we wait upon thee, for thou haſt made all theſe things. It is he that cloatheth the heavens with blackneſs, Iſay.* 50. 3. *Hoſe.* 2. 21. 22. *I will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oyle, and they ſhall hear Jezreel:* but when God refuſeth to hear, all others cry in vain, they may all ſay as the King of *Iſrael* to the woman that cryed to him, 2 *Kin.* 6. 26. *if the Lord do not help thee whence ſhall I help thee, out of the barn floors or out of the wine-preſs?* yet, how doth vain man reckon without his hoſt? and promiſe himſelf a plentifull encreaſe, and much happineſs

happineſs in the enjoyment of it, like the fool in the Goſpel, *Luk.* 12. 16. &c. when the event ofttimes proves otherwiſe, if their deſigne ſucceed as ſometimes it doth, *for all things fall alike to all, as to the good ſo to the bad*, the ſun ſhines upon the juſt, and the unjuſt, they *give not the glory to God, but ſacrifice to their own nets, and burn incenſe to their drags, Hab.* 1. 16. they think their own arm ſaveth them, and their own wiſdom and endeavours enricheth them; they are like the king of *Aſſyria* that ſaid, *Iſai.* 10. 13. *by the ſtrength of my hand I have done it, and by my wiſdome, for I am prudent*: but what had all my labour profited me, or what good would theirs have done them, if God had not given rain? I went yet further in my conſideration of the great mercy and benefit of water, without which it were impoſſible that man or beaſt, or fiſh, or foul, or hearb or plant, or any other creature ſenſitive or vegetable, ſhould live or proſper, and wondred at my own and others ſtupidity, that we took ſo little notice of the mercy, and gave God ſo little thanks for it, but this mercy was more prized by the ancient; by *Iſrael* in the wilderneſs, by *Jacob*, yea, by *Ahab*, 1 *Kin.* 18. 5. *And* Ahab *ſaid to* Obadiah, *go into the land unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks, peradventure we may finde graſs to ſave the horſes and the mules*

*mules alive, and they divided the land between them,* &c. When I had a while conſidered of theſe things, I raiſed my Meditation a little higher, and conſidered if rain were ſo refreſhing to the thirſty earth, and ſo neceſſary for the fruits thereof, what was the dew of heaven to the poor ſoul? without it all the Ordinances would prove of little uſe, and all the ſowing, planting and manuring would ſignifie little; the ſoul under thoſe enjoyments would be like the *heath of the deſart, that ſees not when good comes*; what cauſe then have we to depend upon God for the one, and for the other; oh my ſoul, are thy endeavors croſt, and thy labour loſt? learn to depend upon God for the time to come, concern not thy ſelf overmuch in the world; if it ſmile upon thee, let it not ſteal away thy affection; if it frown on thee, trouble not at it; for theſe things are at the diſpoſe of thy father, and he mindes thy good; uſe diligence and providence, becauſe they are commanded duties, but beware of murmuring, and repining becauſe they are forbidden ſins; when thou haſt gone as far as thou canſt, leave the ſucceſs to God, and whatever the iſſue be, acquieſce in his will, if thy endeavours be blaſted, think it was beſt they ſhould be ſo, becauſe God thought thus; if he ſucceed them, bleſs him; if he croſs them, bleſs him alſo; *The Lord hath given,*

*given, and the Lord hath taken away*, ſaith *Job*, *bleſſed be the name of the Lord*: ſeek not great things in the world, expect no more then God hath promiſed, leſt if they fall ſhort of expectation thou be diſcouraged; haſt thou *neither poverty, nor riches, but food convenient*; this was *Agars* petition, *haſt thou food and rayment? the Apoſtle was therewith content*. But for the ſoul, thou muſt not take up with a ſmall portion, labour after the higheſt pitch of godlineſs, and content not thy ſelf with a low frame of ſpirit, be as covetous for grace, as others are for gold, uſe the means diligently, but truſt not to the means, though *Paul* and *Apollos* may plant and water, it is God gives the encreaſe, he only can ſpeak to the heart, and ſay to thy ſins, die, and to thy ſoul, live; oh my God, forgive I beſeech thee my carnal confidence, truſting to the arm of fleſh, both in reference to my body, and ſoul; let me ſee the vanity of all creature-confidences, how little they can avail without thy bleſſing; and however thou croſſeſt my deſignes for the world, Lord, ſucceed my deſignes for heaven, with thy bleſſings; leave me not to the teaching of man, but teach me thy ſelf, water me with the dew of heaven, *and let thy clouds drop fatneſs, inaline my heart to thy teſtimonies, and not to* covetouſneſs.

Upon

*Upon flowers ſeemingly dead in winter, yet flouriſhing in the ſpring.*

23. *Med.* WHen I obſerved ſome flowers in the garden, that all the winter long, when the ſun was remote in the Southern climate, hid their heads, withered, ſeemed to die, and to be extinct: and buried themſelves in their mother earth, yet at the return of the year; when their beloved ſmiled upon them, when the ſun came to the æquinoctial, and began to court them, and ſhine upon them with a more direct ray, and warmer gleam, they crept out of their grave, revived, ſprang again, and flouriſhed, like a love ſick woman, killed with a frown and recovered with a ſmile; thoſe that before go in their mourning-weeds, now put on their beſt apparel; This conſideration made me compare it to the ſtate of a poor ſoul in deſertion, when God the *Sun of righteouſneſs* her beloved, hides his face, and ſtands at a remote diſtance, then it is winter with the ſoul, then it droops, hangs down the head, and is ready to die, and cry out with the ſpouſe, *ſtay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, I am ſick of love*; but there may be life in the root, when it appears not in the branches, when the *Sun of righteouſneſs ariſeth in the ſoul, with healing in his wings, Mal. 4. 2.*

*theſe*

*theſe dry bones will live*; theſe dead branches will bud, theſe ſwouning, fainting ſouls will revive, and theſe buried flowers will ſpring out again; *though they are in the ſhadow of death, light ſhall ſpring out to them*: The herb of grace will not die in a hard winter, when the ſpring comes it will bud and break forth, the beſt of Saints oft have had their fainting-fits: *David that man after Gods own heart*, though well acquainted with the incomes of the ſpirit, the ſmiles of God, and ſpirituall conſolations, yet had many qualms, and fainting-fits, upon the apprehenſion of Gods departure, but God though he ſeem to be long abſent, will not forſake thoſe that are not willing to leave him, *Eſay.* 4. 14. 15. *but Zion ſaid, the Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me, can a woman forget her ſucking-childe, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? yea they may forget, yet will not I forget thee.* A father ſometimes hides himſelf behinde the wall, to try the affections of his little ſon, to ſee whether he will miſs him, what moan he will make in his abſence, or whether he minde his play, and be content without him, when yet he is ſo far from forſaking him, that every tear goes to his heart; ſo God in his withdrawings from his people, is much concerned in the moan they make, and his bowels yearn at their complaints;

as he did at *Ephraims*, when he bemoaned himſelf, *Jer.* 31. 18, 19, 20. *I have ſurely heard Ephraim bemoaning himſelf*, &c. *Is Ephraim my dear ſon? is he a pleaſant child? for ſince I ſpake againſt him, I do earneſtly remember him ſtill, therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will ſurely have mercy upon him, ſaith the Lord; who is among you*, ſaith the prophet, *that feareth the Lord, and walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light? let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay himſelf upon his God. Eſay.* 5. 10. Here we ſee a man may fear God, and yet be in darkneſs, ſometimes the Sun may be eclipſed, ſometimes clouded, but it will break forth again; thoſe that have their eyes enlightned, ſhall ſee it, though the blinde diſcern not between day and night, light and darkneſs; the greateſt part of the world know not what it is to have the Sun of righteouſneſs to ariſe in their hemiſphere; But it is the greateſt grief to a believer that ever befell him in his life, to have the face of his beloved to be clouded from him, and *his ſun to ſet at noon*; then he goes with the ſpouſe, *ſeeking him, ſorrowing, did ye ſee him whom my ſoul loveth?* Cant. 3. 3. *when they ſeek him, and cannot finde him, when they call him, and he gives them no anſwer, Cant.* 5. 6. they ſeek from ordinance to ordinance, from Miniſter to Miniſter, and enquire after him, every room in the houſe may witneſs their

moan, and their complaint, but when they finde, they rejoyce with the Martyr, *Oh* Auſtin, *he is come, he is come* ; oh my ſoul, how ſtands the caſe with thee ? art thou apprehenſive of the approaches, and departures of God from thy ſoul ? doſt thou rejoyce in his preſence, as theſe poor flowers in the preſence of their beloved ? doſt thou mourn at his abſence as they do, and hide thy head ? doſt thou hunger and thirſt after him, as the thirſty man for drink, or the thirſty land for drops of rain ? if thou make little matter of him, it is a ſigne thou haſt little benefit by him, or little love to him, or never kneweſt what it was to have communion with him, he is *the chiefeſt of ten thouſand*, therefore *the virgins love him* ; get as ſtrong an apprehenſion of his love to thee, and thine to him, as poſſibly thou canſt ; this will keep the ſoul from ſtragling ; thou wilt never leave him whom thou loveſt, and he will never leave one that loves him : his withdrawings are but to try thy affections, and he oft loves dearly thoſe he ſeems to loathe, if thou forſake not him, he will never forſake thee ; and an evidence of his love will bear up the heart above trouble ; the Pſalmiſt when *he was ſo troubled that he could not ſpeak*, yet comforted himſelf in conſidering, *the days of old, and the years of ancient times, and calling to his remembrance his ſongs in the night*, *Pſal.* 77. 4, 5, 6. when there is

is a calm and tranquillity in the ſoul, examine thy ſelf by Scripture-evidences, whether there be the truth of grace in thy ſoul or no, and if thou finde it, lay up theſe records againſt a ſtormy-day, when the ſun is clouded, and out of ſight then when thou canſt not reade thy own heart, or ſee grace in thy ſoul, yet maiſt thou ſay, at ſuch a time, in ſuch a place, I examined my ſelf, by ſuch and ſuch marks, grounded upon ſuch and ſuch Scriptures, and plainly, and impartially judged my graces were true; now true grace cannot be loſt, and therefore I know there is fire, though under the aſhes, and true grace though buried under corruption; *and he that then loved me, will love me to the end; yea, with an everlaſting love:* oh my God, aſſiſt me in this work of examination, and not only give me grace, and write thine image upon me, but alſo enable me to reade it, that it may keep me alive, in the winter, when thou ſeemeſt to be at a diſtance from me.

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*Upon fine flowers foul-ſented.*

24. *Med.* WHen I beheld ſome of the faireſt flowers in the garden, and thoſe that made the moſt ſpecious ſhew, and were adorned with the moſt coſtly colours, and were ſet forth in the moſt gorge-

ous dreſs, and were moſt ſumptuouſly arrayed to pleaſe the eye; I commended their form, and ſhape, and comely beauty, but when I drew near, to handle them, to ſmell to them, and put them in my boſome, I found my miſtake, for they were of a ſtinking ſavour, good for nothing but to gaze on at a diſtance; for though they pleaſed my eye, they offended my noſe, and were neither fit to be handled, nor ſmelt to. This made me to conſider, it is not always good to truſt to our own eyes, in our choice, for the eye hath deceived many a man, and will do us, if we truſt to it, and call every thing good, that is beautiful, may we not ſee many a gallant in our times in a gayiſh dreſs, where the bark is better then the body, like the *cinamon tree*, that like the butterfly paints her wings, to cover her deformed carkaſs; how often have I ſeen a handſome, well-ſhap't, beautiful woman with foul conditions, & miſshapen qualities, when under a more rugged skin, and leſs beautiful countenance, and more deformed body, there was a more beautiful ſoul, and Chriſtianlike behaviour: The devil many times baits his hooks with a beautiful woman, when he fiſhes for unwary youth, and ſelldome miſſes of his prey, but by this means deſtroys them ſoul and body; how oft do men that make their eye their cook, and do more care to pleaſe their fancy, then to pleaſe their God,

God, in their choiſe, and looks after beauty more then grace, undoe themſelves, and repent of their choiſe when it is too late. Beauty is but skin-deep, and age or ſickneſs ſoon withers this flower, when grace and goodneſs are more durable, and will not change colour: It were better for many women, if they had fair mindes and foul faces; then might they have eſcaped thoſe ſnares the devil hath laid for their feet, and enſnared their pretious ſouls, grace and beauty is a ſweet conjunction where they meet, and ſometimes though ſeldome we finde them together; thus it was with *Sarah* and *Rebeckah* both fair, both gracious; but when they are ſeperated, as too oft we finde, grace ſhould be preferred by many degrees. An humble gracious ſpirit is a jewel of great price in the eyes of God and wiſe men, but beauty dazles a fools eyes, and makes him blinde, and ſuch *Dalilah's* bring men with *Sampſon* to grind at the mill, and makes their neighbours ſport; I need not prove this, *experientia docet*. From theſe Meditations I aſcended higher and I reſembled theſe fair, but ſtinking flowers to an hypocrite, that ſhews much better, then he is, and looks beſt at a diſtance, and like deceitful wares worſt at hand; he is like a ſtage-player, as the word ſignifies, who often acts the part of a King, a Prince, an honeſt man, when he is indeed

a beggarly fellow, perhaps a worthleſs raſcal; The hypocrite is a ſaint abroad, a devil at home, and plays more parts then one; he is zealous in the congregation, lukewarm in his family, and key-cold in his cloſet; under the vizard of holineſs he acts wickedneſs, and makes religion a cloak to cover his knavery or a ſtalking horſe to take his prey, and thus he deceives men, and many times preys upon them, but can neither deceive God nor the devil; God quickly ſmels the ſtinking ſavour of his rotten lungs, and the devil knows him by his own brand upon him: Oh my ſoul, art not thou guilty of this folly of judging by the appearance, and of being deceived by deceitful ſhews? look more at the ſubſtance, then the ſhadow, at the inward vertue then the form and feature, chooſe not the tree by the leaves, but the fruit, nor a man by his words but his actions, nor a woman by her beauty, but by her good conditions; chooſe not a horſe by his trappings but by his mettle, nor a profeſſor by his diſcourſe, but by his life and converſation; reſpect not a man for a gold ring but for the Jem and jewels of grace that he wears, the faireſt face hath not always the chaſteſt heart, nor the nimbleſt tongue the moſt ſolid wit; the greateſt bragger is not always the wiſeſt nor the richeſt man; the emptieſt barrel makes the greateſt ſound, and the deepeſt water

makes

makes leaſt noiſe: labour more to be good then to ſeem ſo; for God will not judge thee as thou ſeemeſt to be, but as thou art; If the heart be not right, God will wipe off all the paint and plaiſter that is upon thy words and actions, and they ſhall be eſteemed as the fountain is from whence they proceed; be in ſecret what thou ſeemeſt in publick, for the ſame eye is upon thee in the one as well as in the other: hypocrites ſeem to diſtruſt God leſt he ſhould deny the ſervice they do him, and therefore will do nothing but before witneſs; but a true Chriſtian dare take his word, and therefore faſt, pray, and give alms in ſecret; popular applauſe is the oyl that makes the hypocrites chariot-wheels to move, but it is the love of God that conſtrains a Chriſtian: Oh my God, I cannot excuſe my ſelf, or waſh my hands from theſe filthy ſins of pride and hypocriſie; yet my hopes are, they are not in me in a prevailing degree: Lord, curſe and blaſt theſe bitter roots, that *never more fruit may grow upon them*; quell and ſuppreſs every motion that ariſeth in my ſoul of this nature; give me in ſincerity whatever elſe thou ſhalt deny me: Make my heart upright in thy ſtatutes, let me rather be good then ſeem good, and work truth in my inward parts.

25. *Med.* WHen I conſidered what a ſweet ſavour and odoriferous ſmell, a garden of flowers and hearbs ſent forth when it was watered from heaven by a refreſhing ſhower, and cheared again with the ſun-beams darted upon it, what a place of pleaſure, a paradice of delights it ſeemed to be, the ſight, the ſmell and ſavour delighted me, the melodious harmony and birds pleaſed me, ſo that my affections began to grow warm, and my fancy to be tickled with it, and I began with *Peter* to ſay, *it is good being here*; till upon conſideration I checkt my ſelf for my folly, for letting out my affection upon ſuch poor objects, and letting them grovel ſo low upon the ground, and to cloſe with ſuch poor pittiful nothings; then began I to ſcrew my thoughts a little higher, and to ſay to my ſelf, fool that thou art, is there ſo much beauty and ſweetneſs in the creature, yea, in theſe poor pitifull vaniſhing fading creatures, *which to day are* (ſaith Chriſt) *and to morrow are caſt into the oven*, *Mat.* 6. 30. what ſweetneſs then is in the creator, that breathed this ſweetneſs into them; is not he much more ſweet, and delightfull? and why doſt thou not place thy affections upon

on him, *that is altogether lovely* ? *Cant.* 5. 16. wholly deſirable ; *Moſes* thought him ſo, when he preferred *the reproach of Chriſt*, the heavieſt piece of his croſs, *better then all the treaſures in Egypt* : all the excellencies here below, are but the ſhadow, and he is the ſubſtance ; they are but a drop to this ocean, a ray to this ſun, and a ſpark to this fire. Why wilt thou go to the puddle that maiſt go to the fountain-head ? and take up with a handfull of muck, that maiſt have a handfull of angels ? taſte and ſee how ſweet God is, he is ſweetneſs it ſelf, thou that ſo admireſt theſe vaniſhing flowers, whoſe beauty ſuddenly is changed for deformity, why wilt thou not be enamoured upon perfect beauty ? the ſun, the moon, and ſtars are darkſome ſpots in compariſon of the beauty that is in him, *he is white and ruddy, the chief of ten thouſands ; his head is as the moſt fine gold*, &c. *Cant.* 5. 10. 11. red and white ſhews a perfect ſymmetry, a ſound and ſure complexion, and conſtitution : thou ſpeakeſt of pleaſures, but at his right hand are pleaſures for evermore ; all earthly enjoyments yield little content, ſmall pleaſure, and delight ; there is a pound of ſorrow for an ounce of pleaſure, and thoſe alſo are but bitter ſweet pleaſures, but with him are ſatisfying pleaſures unmixed delights, yea, the image of God in the

hearts

hearts of his people, is a thouſand times a more perfect beauty then the world affords, and the graces of the ſpirit in the garden of their ſouls, as they ſhew a more perfect beauty, ſo they yield a more fragrant ſavour and ſweeter ſmell, then all the flowers in the world can do, to a ſpiritual ſence: here is *an orchard of Pomegranats and all pleaſant fruit, camphire and ſpicknard, ſpicknard and ſaffron, Calamus and cynamon, and all trees of frankincenſe, myrrhe and aloes, and all chief ſpices*, *Cant.* 4. 14, 15. ſee how precious God accounts the graces of his people, which here are likened to theſe precious things here mentioned, they ſmell ſweet in the noſtrills of God and man, yea, the word of God and his Ordinances, theſe were *ſweeter to David then honey and the honey-comb, better then thouſands of gold and ſilver, Pſal.* 19. 10. and to *Job, better then his appointed food*; and are none of theſe taking with thee? is there more true worth in a handfull of flowers, that will not pleaſe thee from morning till night, then in thoſe never-ending never-fading pleaſures here preſented to thee? heaven and earth may ſtand amazed at thy folly; oh my ſoul, wallow not in the mire, delight not thy ſelf with the *ſwine* in *ſwill*, when thou maiſt have better, and more dainty food; feed not upon huſks, when thou maiſt have bread

bread enough in thy fathers houſe: graſp not after the ſhadow, when thou maiſt have the ſubſtance; or with the dog in the fable, loſe not the ſubſtance to catch at the ſhadow; deſpiſe peebles, that thou maiſt have pearls; *lay not out money for that which is not bread, nor thy labour for that which profiteth not*; when *wine* and *milk* are offered without money and without price, *Eſay.* 55.12. fill not thy veſſel with water that it can hold no wine; theſe outward things may be of uſe to us, but muſt not be abuſed by us; though they cannot make us happy yet they can point us out where happineſs may be had, and happy is that ſoul that can with the *bee*, gather honey from hearbs and flowers: there is not the moſt contemptible creature that breathes, nor the moſt deſpicable vegetable that lives, nor the pooreſt thing that exiſts, nay nothing, *in rerum natura*, but hath a finger to point us to God; a fly, or flea, or leaf of a tree or graſs-pile, or if any thing be more contemptible, will tell us, whence they had their being; and any, or all of theſe may teach us ſome leſſons, for our inſtruction; yea, the devil which is the grand enemy to mankinde, yet by this heavenly alchymy of divine Meditation, may be made nouriſhment to the ſoul, as of the vipers fleſh, may be made a ſoveraign antidote againſt the vipers ſting;

yea,

yea, it is poſſible to extract heaven out of hell, and God out of the creature: and ſurely that muſt needs be a fat ſoul, that feeds in ſo many fat paſtures: oh my God, keep my affections from cloſing with theſe earthly enjoyments, and teach me the heavenly art of improving them, and drawing out the ſpirits of them; And as commonly they are ſnares and nets, and hurtful to the ſoul: Lord, aſſiſt me, that they may prove beneficiall to it; let mine affections cloſe with thee, and then I need not fear falling into theſe ſnares.

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*Upon hearbs withering in a dry ſeaſon.*

26. *Med.* WHen I beheld the hearbs and flowers, yea, the graſs of the field alſo, in a dry ſeaſon, how they fainted and flag'd, and hang'd the head, for lack of moiſture, the earth being not able to give them a ſupply without further aſſiſtance; It brought to my minde how neceſſary a bleſſing from heaven was to our enjoyments upon earth, and how vain theſe things would prove, if God did *but blow upon them*, and how fooliſh thoſe men were that depended upon their own induſtry, and promiſed themſelves great matters, like the fool in the Goſpel, *Luk.* 12. 16. when they often finde ſuch reckoning

ning is without their hoſt; he, we finde in the midſt of his jolity like a *Fay*, was pruning himſelf in the boughs, and came tumbling down with the arrow in his ſide, his glaſs was run (as one ſaith) when he thought it was but new turned; he was ſhot with the boult, when he gazed on the bow, *this was he that truſted in his riches and was not rich to God*: he had indeed abundance, but it ſignified little to him; but many men promiſe themſelves plenty, and never come to enjoy it; how neceſſary is our dependance upon God for our dayly bread, the greateſt of us have no aſſurance of it, neither is any exempted from ſeeking it daily at the hands of God, I ſaw then that that promiſe was not in vain, which God had made, *Hoſe.* 2. 21, 22. *I will hear the heavens, and the heavens ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they ſhall hear Jezreel*; for though the people ſhould cry to the corn, and to the wine, for relief, and the corn and wine ſhould cry to the earth for nouriſhment, and the earth ſhould cry to the heavens for ſhowers, and the heavens ſhould cry to God for a commiſſion, if God ſhould deny that petition, all the prayers of the other would ſignify nothing; the creatures have no more then what God puts into them; If God give not rain, the creatures muſt languiſh, and the earth

earth fail, the earth muſt be refreſht either by the clouds immediately, or from the fountains by mans induſtry, or it cannot bring forth; but if God deny proviſion, whence ſhall man have it? they may ſay, as the king *Ahab* did, 2 *King.* 6. 26. *if the Lord do not help thee, whence ſhall I help thee, out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-preſs?* he is the fountain that muſt ſupply the ciſtern; he it is *that maketh the ſprings to run among the hills*, and fills our fountains out of his treaſury; *Can any of the vanities of the gentiles give rain?* no they cannot, and all the men on earth, and devils in hell, nay, all the angels of heaven, cannot do it, if he deny it, let men ſay what they pleaſe to the contrary: and without water neither man nor beaſt, fiſh nor foul, hearb nor plant, can long ſubſiſt; this raiſed my Meditation a little higher; I conſidered as it was in naturals, ſo much more in ſpirituals; where neither *Paul* nor *Apollos* can do the work, or make the ſoul fruitful, without God; we have indeed many pipes, but they are all ſupplyed by one common fountain; if God withhold the water of conſolation, we may ſuck long enough before we be ſatisfied: This minded me of a twofold errour in men, one in the exceſs, the other in the defect, ſome, they ſuck at the pipe, and neglect the fountain, theſe may ſuck long enough before they

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are ſatisfied; the other thinking to be ſupplyed immediately by the fountain, neglect the pipe; theſe fail on the other hand, in not uſing the means God hath appointed them; ſome truſt in the ordinances, and think them ſufficient, and idolize the Miniſters, theſe many times ſuck at dry breaſts; the pipe can give no more then it receives from the fountain: the other think themſelves above ordinances, and neglect them, the ordinary way appointed by God for their ſupply; and theſe ofttimes argue themſelves out of their Religion: though the dug be not that which feeds the childe, yet the childe muſt ſuck milk through the dug, from the breaſt, or otherwiſe is not like to have it; though the pipe cannot ſupply, it is the uſuall means of bringing the water: the Miniſtry of the word is uſually honoured with the converſion of ſouls, though God can, and no doubt ſometimes doth work converſion without them, yet it is rare; *Cornelius* you finde was directed by an Angel, to *Peter*, *Act.* 10. 4, 5. though the angel certifyeth him, *that his alms and his prayers were accepted*, yet he reads not to him the doctrine of redemption, though no doubt he could better have done it then *Peter*, had God given him a commiſſion; but the office of preaching is given to the Miniſters not to angels; We finde *Paul*, when he was ſtrucken down

in

in the way, as he journeyed towards *Damaſcus*, Chriſt did not teach him himſelf, but ſends him to *Ananias*, *Act. 9. 6. &c.* and hereby graceth his own ordinance: ſo *Philip* by the ſpirit of God, was ſent to inſtruct the *Eunuch*, *Acts.* 8. 29. now either Chriſt himſelf, immediately, or the angel, or the ſpirit, might have done the work, had not God intended to have honoured his Meſſengers with the work of mans converſion, and alſo to leave it as a ſtanding ordinance to the world, for the bringing in, and building up thoſe that ſhall be ſaved; and therefore 'tis not ſafe to contemn it: Oh my ſoul, fall not out with the pipe, for this is the appointed way to bring water from the fountain; fall not in love with it, for of it ſelf it can give no ſatisfaction; uſe it thou muſt, but idolize it thou muſt not; truſt not in men, nor means, food nor phyſick, though thou muſt make uſe of them; *Curſed is the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the living God*: all other are phyſitians of no value; *clouds without water, broken ciſterns that can hold no water*: It was *Aſa's* failing, (and no doubt a groſs one) *to ſeek to the phyſitians in the neglect of God*: think it not ſufficient for the body to make uſe of the ableſt phyſitian, nor for the ſoul to live under the ableſt Miniſter,

for

for many bodyes and ſouls periſh under ſuch; if God help thee not, whence ſhall they help thee? the ſun in a clear day may be ſeen in a pail of water, but if it be clouded, all the water in the world cannot ſhew it; the ordinance is the uſual place where God may be ſeen, but till God open mens eyes, there is none can ſee him there, yet muſt not the ordinances be deſpiſed, for uſually God makes diſcoveries of himſelf there, he could have fed *Elijah* himſelf, or by an Angel, yet ſends him food by a raven, he could have taught *Paul* as well as ſtruck him down, as is before-noted, yet ſends him to *Ananias*; he ſeldom works otherwiſe where the means of grace is to be had; he could have healed *Hezekiah* with a word, yet uſeth a bunch of figs; no matter what is the diſeaſe, or what is the receipt, if God bleſs it: Oh my God, afford me the means of grace, the Miniſtry of thy word, and leave me not up to a famine of thy word, nor leave me not to the teaching of man, but follow home every truth, and ſet it home by thy holy ſpirit: let me not ſuck an empty dug, then ſhall I draw nothing but winde: let me not draw at an empty pipe, then ſhall I ſuck and not be ſatisfied: ſupply the dug from a full breaſt, and the pipe from a full fountain, then ſhall I be fat and flouriſhing.

## *Upon the difference between the various ſorts of flowers and vegetables.*

27. *Med.* WHen I conſidered the various forms, features, ſhapes, colours and vertues of the ſeveral ſorts of herbs, flowers, and other vegetables, and though there are perhaps many hundred ſeveral *ſpecies* in the world, yet every *ſpecies* hath a diſtinct colour, ſhape, and vertue different from the reſt, whereby they may be perfectly known, found out, and diſtinguiſht one from another by a skilfull artiſt, and all theſe together adorn the creation, and make the earth lovely, and every one hath its peculiar uſe. While I ſpent ſome thoughts on theſe things, and was admiring the creatures wiſdome, in theſe works of his hands, and his good to mankinde to give a ſalve to every ſore; for he hath made nothing in vain; it came to my minde how many thouſand millions of faces are upon the face of the earth, all alike and yet unlike, all reſembling one another, and yet ſcarce two perſons to be found out in the whole world, ſo like, but they may be differenced one from another; in ſome thing or another, by a diſcerning eye; this alſo raiſed my meditation from the creature to the Creator, to admire his wiſdome and

skill

skill, that hath, as before noted, thus diſtinguiſhed between the ſeveral ſort of vegetables, though many hundreds, and between ſo many hundred thouſands of faces among rational creatures, that as *he gives to every ſeed his own body*, ſo he gives to every peculiar *ſpecies* his own proper colour, ſhape, odour, and vertue, and to every individual of the *ſpecies*, and to every rational creature his own proper face and feature, all lovely, amiable and comely, and yet different one from another, all agreeing in the main, and yet diſagreeing in one thing or other: Oh the omnipotent power and wiſdome of the great God, *how unſearchable are his counſels, and his ways paſt finding out*; And as they differ in bodily ſhape, ſo alſo in the endowments of the minde; there is very great variety, and diverſity amongſt men, ſcarce two can be found in an age alike qualified; very few of the ſame minde in all things, *quot homines tot ſententiæ*, is a ſaying not more antient then true; ſo many men ſo many mindes; for where ſhall we finde a perfect agreement between any two, how various alſo are the gifts of the ſame ſpirit to the ſons of men? God doth not intruſt any one man with all, neither is there any that have not ſome talent, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. *now there are diverſity of gifts, but the ſame ſpirit*, &c. *for to one is gi-*

*ven by the ſpirit, the word of wiſdome, to another the word of knowledge, by the ſame ſpirit; to another faith by the ſame ſpirit, to another the gift of healing by the ſame ſpirit; to another the working of miracles, to another propheſie, to another diſcerning of ſpirits, to another diverſe kindes of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues, but all theſe worketh that one and the ſelf ſame ſpirit, dividing to every man ſeverally as he will,* &c. and *to one is given ten talents, to another five, and to another one,* according to the place, and imployment they are ſet in, and the work God requires at their hands; as the diverſe ſmells of flowers, comes from the ſame influence, and the diverſe ſounds in the organ from the ſame breath, ſo divers-operations from the ſame ſpirit; and all for the good of the whole; he that is not fit to ſerve the body, is not fit to be of the body; God gives to every man according to his place and ſtation, and will require an account of what he gives, ſome are deeply skil'd in the original tongues, and other languages, others excell in philoſophical notions, ſome ſearch natures garden from end to end, and become excellent artiſts there; ſome excell in one ſcience, ſome in another, ſome in the law, ſome in phyſick, ſome in divinity, ſome in geometry, ſome excell for deep inventions, others are good artiſts,

tiſts, *&c.* and among Chriſtians ſome excel in one grace, and ſome in another; ſome are deep in humiliation, ſome have a great meaſure of ſelf-denial, ſome excell in faith, ſome in patience, *&c.* among Miniſters each hath his peculiar gift, ſome are good Textuaries, and ſome criticks; ſome are good in caſe-divinity, ſome are skil'd in controverſies, and are excellent diſputants; ſome are for explication, and ſome are beſt at application; ſome for conviction, and others for comforting afflicted conſciences, and all for the common good, *Ephe.* 4. 11, 12. *and he gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evaugeliſts, and ſome Paſtors, and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the miniſtry, for the edifying the body of Chriſt.* Oh my ſoul, haſt thou any one of theſe gifts, hath God lent thee any talent, why haſt thou not improved it? how comes it to paſs in all this time, that thou haſt not increaſt it? God will require it at thy hand ere long, and it is wonder it had not been taken away ere now: hadſt thou been diligent thou mighteſt (as others) with the good ſervant, *Luk.* 19. 16. have ſaid, *Lord, thy one pound hath gained ten pounds*; when alas it is to be feared, thou canſt not ſay, it hath gained two: though God will not blame thee that thou haſt received no more, yet will he blame thee for improving that no

better; the time is coming God will call his ſervants to an account, as well as his enemies, and reckon with them; take heed of receiving any grace in vain, nor envy thoſe that have received more; perhaps they received no more, but have better imployed what they had; let this put thee on to diligence, not to murmuring, covet grace rather then gifts, and to to pray fervently, rather then rhetorically; ſtammering *Moſes* ſhall be heard, as ſoon as Eloquent *Aaron*: had idleneſs been a lawful calling, we ſhould have had many good husbands, as well as good fellows; but God diſowns ſuch, and it is no hard matter to diſcern a wane and decay in ſuch mens gifts and parts, and that the Lord is taking away his talents from them, and giving them to ſome other that will better improve them: and is laying them aſide as broken veſſels, and ere long they ſhall be as dead men out of minde, when the diligent ſhall be had in everlaſting remembrance? oh my God, lay not to my charge my former folly, my ſloth and negligence; take not away thy talent from me, but give me a heart better to improve it; let me double my diligence, and amend my pace, that thou maiſt never ſay to me, as to that unfaithful and unprofitable ſervant, *Mat. 25. 26. take him, binde him hand and foot, and caſt him into outer darkneſs.*

*Upon*

*Upon withering herbs and flowers.*

28. *Med.* UPon the ſight of ſome withered herbs and flowers that a little before were freſh and flouriſhing, and made a beautiful ſhew in the hand, and boſome, but now were fit for nothing but the dunghill, I began to conſider, thus it is with many of the profeſſors of our age, many that have made a fair ſhew, and held out a large profeſſion in the ſight of the ſun, are already dead and withered, and many more begin to hang the head, and droop, and their death is dayly expected, and all for want of root; the ſun of perſecution ſhining upon them hath killed many; if it ſhould ariſe indeed, many more would wither; feigned converſion proves unfeigned apoſtaſy; how much ſalt hath already loſt its ſavour, and is now become good for nothing, no not for the dunghill: How many glorious lamps have I ſeen in my days blown out or extinguiſhed for lack of oyl? yea, went out in a ſnuff, and ſome of them ſtunk in the ſocket; *they had a name to live, but they were dead, Rev.* 3. 1. God knows his own ſheep, and thoſe given to Chriſt he will not loſe one; but theſe (ſaith the Apoſtle) *are gone from among us becauſe they were not of us*; they with the Jewes cry *the temple of the Lord*, when they matter

not the Lord of the temple; *these are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear; clouds they are without water, carried about with windes; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots, raging waves of the Sea foaming out their own shame, wandring-stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever; Jud.* 12. 13. they were never better then meteors and so they end in a snuff; they are constant in nothing but inconstancy; and being dead are fitted for the fire; they like empty clouds promise refreshing showers but yield none; and with the stony ground spring up, and flourish for a season, and they fall away, wither and come to nothing; how many *Cedars* of late have been blown down with the winde? and many more will fall, if the winde rise: many great lights have been extinguished, and many noted professors leave Christ, with the young man in the Gospel, rather then their riches, *Mar.* 10. 21. *&c.* such blabs are soon blown up, and such bubbles are soon broken; with *Demas* these men choose the world before Christ; yea perhaps with *Judas* they will betray him for money: and why is all this, but because *they received not the truth in the love of it, God gave them up to strong delusions to believe a lye*, &c. 2 *Thes.* 2. 10, 11. when they turned professors they took not Christs Counsel, *to sit down first and*

*reckon the charges*, and therefore like the foolish builder began to lay the foundation, and was not able to finish, they took up religion upon trust, and considered not what it would cost them, or what God required at their hands, and when reproaches, losses, or crosses come, they soon kick it up, and will not be of such a chargable profession; some take it up for wrong ends, and intend to make it but as a cloak to cover their designes, or as a stalking-horse to take their prey, and when the prey is taken, or the designe brought about, or they disappointed, the cloak is cast aside, the vizard cast off, and the stalking-horse laid by as useless; many drive on some carnal designe under such a disguise, and use religion as a workman doth his tools; as long as one will serve he useth it, and when it will not, he lays by that, and takes another: if persecution will fit the designe better then profession, he takes up that; it is no strange thing to see men in our age persecute what they have profest: those that follow Christ for loaves, not for love, will cry *Hosannah* to day, and *crucifie* to morrow; if the winde turn; for many are resolved rather to wrong their consciences, then that their consciences should wrong them; Oh my soul, do so many flowers fade, and so much corn wither for want of root? are so many *Cedars*

blown

blown down by the winde, and ſo many forward profeſſors turned apoſtates at the apprehenſion of danger? look to thy ſelf, *ſet ſtrait ſteps to thy feet, leſt that which is halting be turned out of the way*; take heed leſt if the ſun of perſecution ariſeth, thou alſo be offended and wither, for want of root; reſt not therefore till thou canſt ſay with *Job*; *the root of the matter is in me*, *Job.* 19. 28. let thy ends and motives be ſound, or otherwiſe thy profeſſion will prove rotten; expect ſufferings and prepare to bear them, or elſe never ſet up thy trade of Chriſtianity: if heaven be not worth having at the greateſt rate, and Chriſt at the deareſt price, never meddle with theſe commodities; if they are, break not for price; the *pearl* in the Goſpel is worth all that thou haſt; if religion be not good, never profeſs it; if it be, never forſake it; ſet down firſt and reckon the charges with the wiſe builder, and whatſoever thou canſt finde others have paid for it, thou maieſt expect the like may be required of thee; and if upon this rate the bargain will do thee no good, meddle not with it; thou maiſt finde *Jeremy* in deriſion dayly, every one mocked him; *David* was the *drunkards ſong*, *Job* the very abjects derided him, the Apoſtles were made the off-ſcow[illegible] of all things; reckon therefore reproach [illegible]y be thy portion, ſeeing alſo Chriſt

Christ himself was not free; *omnis Christianus est crucianus*; thou maiest reade, some for their religion sake were forsaken by their friends, as Christ by his brethren; this may be thy condition: some have lost their estates, and have been exposed to hardship, and so maist thou; some have been cast into prisons; thus *Jeremy*, *Peter*, *Paul*, and *Silas*, and many more, this may be thy portion; some, yea, many thousands, have been brought to this state, and sacrificed their lives in the flames, and who knows but it may be required of thee? canst thou break through these difficulties? else never set a step further in profession; if heaven will not make thee amends for earth, and God for the creature, and eternal life for the loss of a temporal: Oh my God, without thy support I shall never be able to hold out, but *through thee I can do all things*; I know there is more excellency in thee then the world can afford, and if I lose my God, my soul, my heaven, and happiness, to preserve my estate, my life or liberty, it will be a losing bargain; these things I can want, Christ I cannot want; Lord, give me him, though upon the hardest terms, let me have strong apprehensions of my love to thee, and thine to me, then shall I never leave thee nor forsake thee, let not the glory of the world dazle my sight, that I cannot behold thee in glory.

*Upon*

*Upon the ſpringing of herbs in the ſpring time.*

29. *Med.* AFter a ſharp winter when the ſpring approached and the Sun began to look more chearfully upon the earth, and to ſhine upon it with a more direct ray, I beheld the herbs and flowers which before ſeemed dead and withered, began now to bud and germinate, and to ſpring forth, and to look lively, lovely, and amiable; the graſs waxed green and the face of the earth was changed, from what it was a few weeks ago; trees leaved, and all ſeemed to rejoyce at the ſuns approach, and to anſwer the ſpringing ſhowers which kindely fell upon them, and thoſe flowers that even now hid their heads, and were buried in the earth, now crept out of their cells, and in their kinde returned praiſe to their great benefactour, and the winter which ſeemed to have kil'd them, did but prepare them for their future encreaſe; this made me conſider, if it be thus with poor vegetables, that are ſoon ſenſible of the approaching ſpring, and ſoon anſwer the ſun beams darting upon them, and the refreſhing ſhowers wherewith they are watered, ſurely it ſhould be ſo with the ſoul, when it comes from under the clouds of affliction, and *when the ſun of righteouſneſs ariſeth with*

*healing*

*healing in his wings*; this made me conſider mine own condition, whether I had anſwered the pains and coſt which God had beſtowed upon me, whether my affliction which God had laid upon me, the ſharp winter, that I had undergone, and the ſharp ſhowers I had felt, had wrought ſuch an effect upon me, as the winter and the influences of heaven, had done upon theſe poor vegetables, *viz.* made my graces germinate, and break forth, bud and bloom, and bring forth fruit; for I ſaw whereever life is in the root, it will ſhew forth it ſelf in the branches: oh my ſoul, thou haſt had a long and ſharp winter, what effect hath in wrought in thee? thou haſt lain in the furnace of affliction, is thy droſs conſumed; or is it not? I have been under piming ſickneſs, brought to the gates of death, yet hath God ſaid to me, live: I have been threatned with pinching wants, yet more frightned then hurt; and when ſtript of all, God let me ſee, that he could make proviſion, and was able to provide and *furniſh a table in the wilderneſs*; *the barrel of meal waſted not, and the cruſe of oyl did not fail*; God bleſſed a little, and it ſufficeth; when I was driven from friends and relations, he raiſed me up friends more true, then many of my relations; and in due time he ſaid to me, as ſometime to *Jacob, Gen.* 32. 9. *return into thy own countrey,*

*and*

*and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee*: ſometimes I have been under a cloud, and then again the cloud hath been ſcattered, and the ſun hath broke out again; many have been the diſpenſations of providences, I have been under: oh my ſoul, how doſt thou anſwer Gods expectations in theſe providences? *affliction ſprings not out of the duſt, neither doth trouble riſe out of the ground, is there evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?* whoever is the inſtrument God hath a hand in the work, whoever be the rod, it is he that layes it on; it hath a voice and we ſhould hear it? he hath an end, and that is thy reformation; doſt thou anſwer his end? if the rod be removed before the childe be reformed, either he intends to get a bigger rod, or leaves thee off as incorrigible, which is the ſoreſt judgement. The winter now is paſt, and the ſinging of birds is come, the earth and all things therein look lovely, and each vegetable where life is, diſcovers it: and is it only winter with thee? and doth no fruit appear? God juſtly may ſay to thee, as of the fruitleſs fig-tree, *never fruit grow more on thee for ever*; if all his labour be loſt, and all his expectations fruſtrated, and all his plowing, ſowing, and manuring vain, he will ſay of thee, as ſometimes of his vineyard, *what could I have done more for him then I have done? wherefore then when I*

*expected*

*expected fruit doth he bring forth wilde grapes?* canſt imagine God will always bear with a barren fruitleſs tree in his orchard, or an unprofitable, unfaithfull ſervant in his houſe, or a hard and ſtony heart that neither ſummers ſun, nor winters froſt can work upon, neither judgements nor mercies mollify? many a year he hath been ſeeking fruit and findeth none, and yet hath been prevailed with to try thee one year more, but his patience will not long bear with thee: if reformation prevent not, the ſentence will ere long be paſt, *cut him down why cumbers he the ground?* many a time the ſun hath ſhone with a favourable aſpect upon thee, and many a time the dew of heaven hath been ſhowred down, many a faithfull skilfull husbandman hath been ſent to dreſs thee, and manure thee, and muſt Chriſt when he ſeeks fruit ſtill meet with diſapointments? art thou ſo hard and rocky, that no furnace will melt thee, nor hammer break thee, or bring the into form meet for his building? then muſt thou be thrown out amongſt the rubbiſh: Oh my God, this is my condition by nature, but thou canſt change my nature, thou haſt a furnace will melt me, and bring me into any form, thou haſt a hammer can break me, and fit me for thy work: thou canſt ſoften me, and make me pliable, thou canſt

take

*take away the ſtony heart, and give me a heart of fleſh:* Lord, is it not thy promiſe? make it good to me, blow upon my ſoul and the graces of thy ſpirit will bud and break forth; ſpeak the word and my ſoul ſhall live; Lord, teach me thy ſelf, and leave me not to the teaching of man, there is no other can reach the heart, they ſpeak only to the ear.

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*Upon a withering knot of herbs.*

30. *Med.* WHen I beheld a knot of herbs, mixt with flowers in the garden, in a decaying, withering condition, ſome part dead, others languiſhing; and but a few alive and flouriſhing, I left off weeding, dreſſing, cutting and manuring them, as thoſe that never were likely to anſwer my pains, or recompence my labour, but conſidering there were ſome living which were likely to be choakt with weeds if let alone, and diſregarded; I tranſplanted them into better ſoil, leaving the dead ones to themſelves for the fire, or any other uſe, I mattered them not: I conſidered then how gaſtly, and unſeemly the place was, when the living herbs were removed, what a confuſed heap, and worthleſs piece it was, of no profit, pleaſure,

pleaſure, or benefit; the thoughts of this ſtrait brought to my minde, that as I had dealt with theſe withering herbs, and flowers, ſo God oftentimes doth by a withering Church, ſome of them he takes into his boſome, others he tranſplants, and findes them a better place, and then roots up the reſt, or reſerves them for the fire, or ſome other judgement; perhaps lets them alone a while to bear a place, and perhaps the name of flowers, till at laſt they are rotten-ripe, and fit for nothing but burning. Thus he preſerved *Noah* for another plot, which he was about to make, when he deſtroyed the old world, which before was his garden, when the plants were moſt dead: He removed *Lot* into another ſoil, when he rooted up his garden in *Sodom*, he would not fence a place for ſo few living herbs, but laid it waſte, and burnt it up; he tranſplanted *Abraham* from the place of his nativity, and found room by his providence for *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, whoſe poſterity he tranſplanted into *Egypt*, where for a long time they did thrive and proſper; till in the end overrun with weeds briars and thorns, he tranſplanted *Iſrael* into *Canaan*, and caſt the Egyptians, thoſe dead and worthleſs plants, thoſe weeds and thorns into the Red-ſea: and ſince that time hath laid waſte many a garden, which

formerly did flouriſh, when they withered and decayed; witneſs the ſeven famous Churches of *Aſia*, mentioned *Rev.* 2. *and* 3. *chapters*, and ſuffereth briars and thorns to overrun the places: I conſidered, that when God removes his own plants either into his boſome, or elſewhere, it is time for the other to look about them, *Eſay.* 57. 1. *the righteous periſheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and mercifull men are taken away, none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evill to come.* When Gods jewels are removed, his care of that place is over; when his flowers are gone, *he will pluck up his hedge, and throw down his wall, and let it be eaten up and troden down, he will lay it waſte, it ſhall not be pruned nor digged, and there ſhall come up briars and thorns, and he will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it*, *Eſay.* 5. 5, 6. and how gaſtly doth that place look which is thus fore-let, and forſaken by God? This conſideration made me think, it is time for *England* to look about them, *gray hairs are here and there upon us, yet we conſider it not*, *Hoſea.* 7. 9. we may ſee many a withering branch, and dying Chriſtian amongſt us, fetching the laſt gaſp, that formerly ſeemed flouriſhing, fat, and in good liking; when men employ not their talents well, no wonder if God take from them *that which they ſeemed to have*, this

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is verified in many that have had freſh and fragrant parts, and gifts, and have formerly excelled others; but theſe parts are withered for want of uſe, and the diligent Chriſtian formerly below them, now excels them, and the unprofitable ſervant is reſerved for utter darkneſs, and how ill favoured do thoſe look that are thus withered? nay, have we not great cauſe to fear God is leaving his garden in *England*, ſeeing he hath tranſplanted ſo many of his choiſeſt flowers into *America*, and of late hath taken ſo many into his own boſome, and there are ſo few left that really flouriſh, and ſo many are on the dying hand, and reall holineſs and the power of godlineſs is ſo ſcarce; oh my ſoul, art not thou one of theſe dead, or at leaſt withering plants? art thou fallen from thy firſt love? *where are the love of thy eſpouſals*; or theſe affections, and the zeal manifeſted in thy younger years? hath thy age encreaſed thy wiſdome? and is that ſeen in growing more ſtrange with thy God, and more luke-warm in his ſervice? and in having leſs care of thy ſoul, and in taking leſs pains for heaven? time was, thou waſt more freſh and flouriſhing, and like to a green bay-tree, but now thou groweſt old and dry, and little ſap and vigour doth appear; is this the fruit of all the pains God hath beſtowed upon thee? is it to make

thee more dry and barren? the trees of righteouſneſs planted by the rivers of water, ſhould never want fruit nor leaf, yea, *ſhould bring forth fruit to old age*: yea, thy fruit in age may be expected to be more, and mellower, ripened by age, and a more mature judgment; thou haſt born the burthen and heat of the day, and wilt thou now quit the vineyard, or ceaſe and ſlack thy work, when thou ſhouldſt come and receive thy wages? *if thou turn back, Gods ſoul will have no pleaſure in thee; if thou put thy hand to the plow, and look back, thou art not fit for the kingdom of heaven*, neither will thy righteouſneſs be remembred: in thy ſin thou ſhalt dye, thou art ready to go off the Stage of the world, and wilt act thy laſt ſcene worſt, and be hiſt at in the end: wilt thou loſe all the pains that ever thou haſt taken in heavens way, and at laſt remit thy zeal, when thou ſhouldſt double thy diligence? is it not *he that holds out to the end that ſhall be ſaved*? didſt thou ever yet repent of any pains thou didſt take for heaven? and doſt thou think thou ſhalt ever have cauſe to repent hereafter? art thou affraid thy reward will be too great, or thy crown of glory too heavy? or that God will love thee too well? or that thou ſhalt make heaven too ſure? if not, why doſt thou ſlack thy pace? doſt thou expect a better maſter, or better work, or better wages? if not,

not, take heed by thy negligence, leſt thou force God to put thee out of his ſervice: oh my God, keep my heart upright in thy ſervice, and direct my ſteps that I turn not aſide; keep me from the rage of ſatan, that I be not captivated by him, he ſeeks my ſoul to undo it, and fain would make me loſe my reward; Lord, make me *faithfull to the death, and then give me a crown of life.*

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*Upon the unknown vertues of many vegetables.*

31. *Med.* WHen upon the ſtricteſt ſearch and ſcrutiny that I could poſſibly make, I could not finde out, the natures, properties, vertues, operations, ends, and uſes of ſeveral vegetables, and other ſimples, nor indeed the full uſe, vertue, and benefit of any one of them; and I ſuppoſe I have cauſe to think, that the greateſt artiſt in natures garden, cannot do it; nay, if all pretenders to this art ſhould join heart and hand in the work, and combine themſelves together, and uſe their utmoſt diligence, yet would they fall ſhort of making a perfect diſcovery of it, though I know every age makes ſome further progreſs in it then the preceding did, yet very many things lie hid from the choiſeſt wits; this made me

admire the wisdome of the Creator, that hath made nothing in vain, and hath put such admirable vertues into such despicable weeds, that did we know their worth, we should prize them at a higher rate, that now we despise: and if we cannot finde out the vertues and operation of those things which we are every day conversant with, no wonder if we are ignorant of God, of the Trinity, of the Incarnation of Christ, and those more abstruce points of Religion, more remote from our sences, and above our capacity: he that cannot attain to know the nature of his own soul, no wonder if he be ignorant of the nature of angels: my thoughts upon this account roved further, and I considered several small seeds, so much resembling one another, that my eye could scarcely difference them the one from the other, and yet I saw, when those were sown together in the same plot, nourisht in the same mould, refreshed with the same Sun, and watered with the same showers, they produced plants much differing in nature, colour, scent, quantity, quality, vertue, and operations; this made me cry out, the finger of God, that hath put such vertues in so small despicable seeds; it minded me also of the Apostles words, *God hath given to every seed his own body*, 1 *Cor.* 15.38. whersoever these vegetables are sown, planted, or replanted,

replanted, ſtill the *ſpecies* are continued, neither do they degenerate into another kinde. When I conſidered that ſuch efficacy and vertue ſhould be virtually included in ſo ſmall a ſeed, I thought it matter of admiration, yea, that ſo ſmall a thing, as a nut, or acorn, or the kernel of an apple or pear, ſhould produce ſo great a tree, of ſo vaſt a bulk, as the Oak, the apple-tree, or the pear-tree, this made me to admire the wiſdom, power, and providence, of the great God, which Chriſt himſelf ſeems to take notice of in the *muſtard ſeed*, which being ſo very ſmall, produceth a plant of ſuch a bigneſs. that the birds build their neſts in the branches; this minded me alſo of the nature of grace and ſin, which from ſmall beginnings come to great perfection, and whereever they are they become fruitful; grace proceeds from a grain to a tree, and as a little leaven leaveneth the lump, ſo grace encreaſeth till it makes a univerſal change in the whole man; it makes a man *ſemper idem*, always the ſame: *Job* upon the throne and upon the dunghill is holy *Job* ſtill; it brings forth the fruits of the ſpirit whereever it is planted, *Gal.* 5. 22. *but the fruit of the ſpirit is love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance, againſt ſuch there is no law*; but where ſin is, it brings forth the fruits of the fleſh,

it grows from one degree to another, from a thought to a reſolution, thence to action, and at length comes to a habit, and hard it is to be left: *Bray a fool* (ſaith *Solomon*) *in a morter, with a peſtle like wheat, yet will not his fooliſhneſs depart from him, Pro.* 27.22. A wolf will have a wolviſh nature though his skin be ſtript over his ears, and his bones be broken, as every ſeed produceth its own kinde, and not another *ſpecies*, ſo grace and ſin, ſhew themſelves in their production: men *gather not grapes of thorns, not figs of thiſtles*; *a good tree cannot bring forth evill fruit, nor a corrupt tree good fruit*; but *every tree is known by his fruit*: oh my ſoul, are there ſecrets in nature that thou underſtandeſt not? yea, even in thoſe creatures that thou doſt dayly converſe with? admire the wiſdome of the Creator, and ſee how little beholding thou art to ſin, which hath drawn ſuch a vail of ignorance before thy eyes, and wonder not that there are myſteries in ſpirituals, beyond thy conceiving; if thou canſt not underſtand temporalls, much leſs ſpirituals that are *ſpiritually diſcerned*; the nature of God, of Angels, and of thy ſelf, lie far more remote from thy underſtanding. There is many a man that can ſearch natures garden from end to end, that never could ſearch his own heart; many can try their evidence for lands,

lands, that know not how to try their title to heaven; they can finde out the ſtate of their bodies, but know not the ſtate of their ſouls; but when others ſtudy earth, do thou ſtudy heaven; the things that are neceſſary, are attainable: *ſtudy Chriſt, and him crucified*, this will do thee more good, then if thou couldſt with *Solomon* diſcourſe of all the vegetables from the *cedar* in *Lebanon* to the hyſop that groweth upon the way; and did men ſtudy God and themſelves as much as they did the creature, it would bring in more profit. The knowledg of theſe things is excellent, but the knowledge of God, and our ſelves is neceſſary; all thy time is little enough for this ſtudy; the other muſt be left to more curious heads, and riper witts; oh my God, ſuffer me not to ſpend my time in any unneceſſary ſtudy that ſhould be ſpent in ſeeking thee; let me not catch at the ſhadow, and loſe the ſubſtance, and hunt ſo long after curioſities, till I loſe my ſelf, and know not which way to return: all my time is little enough to ſpend in my generall and particular calling; all the water is little enough to run in this channel, and I have none to ſpare to turn any other mill: let my greateſt care be to know God, and my ſelf, the duty I owe him, and the relation I ſtand in to him; and what intereſt

reſt I have in Jeſus Chriſt, Lord, let this be the work of the remaining part of my life.

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*Upon ſome deſpicable weeds, yet uſefull.*

32. *Med.* WHen I ſaw ſome poor contemptible, deſpicable weeds, that uſually grow in the fields, without labour, pains or care of man, or are thrown out of the garden with contempt, as not fit to have a being there, but to be trod upon and deſpiſed, as not being, neither ſweet for ſavour, nor beautifull to the eye; and yet when I beheld theſe very weeds gathered, and ſucceſsfully uſed, by the greateſt artiſts in phyſick and ſurgery, for the curing of great diſtempers, when the more glorious, gorgeous, and more eſteemed vegetables were diſregarded, this made me conſider, how deceitfull a thing it is to judge by the outward appearance, and that beauty and vertue are not alway linkt together, neither go they hand in hand; many have been deceived when they have pleaſed their eyes by beauty; the devil manytimes baits his hook with a fair woman, and many have been undone by ſwallowing ſuch a hook: many that have made beauty their aim, have been matcht with foul conditions:

conditions: *Samuel* that man of God, was deceived by his eye, when he thought *Eliab, Davids* elder brother, had been the Lords annointed, becauſe he had a comely countenance, 1 *Sam.* 16. 6. *and it came to paſs after they were come, that he looked on* Eliab, *and ſaid, ſurely the Lords anointed is before him; but the Lord ſaid to* Samuel, *look not on his countenance, or on the heighth of his ſtature, becauſe I have refuſed him; for the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* Many a man under a ruſſet coat carries more real worth, more true gentillity, yea, nobillity, then others do under their ſilks and ſattins, velvets, and ſcarlets; many a worthleſs piece is dreſt puppet-like, with paint, and plaiſter, and ridiculous gewgaws, but could we but ſee the ſoul through the gayiſh dreſs of the body, it would appear leprous and deformed, nay, perhaps in the body it ſelf there would appear viſible marks of deformity, as well as of infirmity; paint and plaiſter better become a mud-wall, then a marble pillar; true beauty needs no varniſh; nor a diamond needs no painting; ſpotted faces often cover ſpotted ſouls; and *their ſpot is not the ſpot of Gods people*: there are many that like the *Cinamon-tree*, have the bark better then the body; but it is a

fool

fool that buys a horse by the trappings, or chooseth a wife by her gaudy dress; or that esteems the better of himself, or imagines that any wise man esteems the better of him, for a fine suit of cloathes; yet there was a disease amongst Christians in the Apostles time, and it is almost epidemical in our days, to respect the cloathes or outward ornaments of a man, more then his conditions and qualifications, *Jam.* 2. 2, 3. *if there come into your assemblies a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile rayment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay cloathing, and say unto him, sit thou here, in a good place, and say to the poor man, stand thou here, or sit here under my footstool*; are you not then partial in your selves? *&c.* but however man may disrespect them, God hath *chosen the poor, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom*: A poor man though wise, yea, *though by his wisdome he save the city, yet is not remembred, Eccl.* 9. 15. this is *merces mundi*, the worlds wages, many deal by such as men do by a fruit-tree, to which they run in a storm, and when it is done, beat him, and rob him of his fruit: many wise Ministers are heard with scorn, or at least with disregard, till men lie upon their death-bed, and then they are sent unto for counsel, or rather comfort. It is not always

See Spurstowe med. ha. 20 pag. 33. &c.

ways thoſe that can ſpeak loudeſt, that ſpeaks beſt, but he that ſpeaks wiſeſt; the empty barrel makes the greateſt ſound: that Sermon is not always beſt that hath moſt gaudy notions, and rhetorical flouriſhes, but that which ſavours moſt of Chriſt, and the divine Eloquence of his holy ſpirit: he is the beſt preacher that woos for Chriſt, and not for himſelf, and would ſet the crown upon his head, and not his own, it is not the beſt phyſitian that ſpeaks moſt *latine, greek, and hebrew,* but he that gives the ſureſt and ſafeſt directions to recover health: it is not the tickling of the fancy, a preacher ſhould ſo much minde, as to ſpeak convincingly to the conſcience: oh my ſoul, judge not by the outward but the inward qualification, neither cover hypocriſy by a mask of ſeeming ſincerity, for God will ere long pluck off ſuch vizors; ſlight no man meerly upon the account of poverty, for God thinks never the worſe of them; admire no man meerly for his riches, for God thinks never the better of him; this is but to worſhip a golden calf: the time is coming, that the king muſt leave his robes behinde him, and the beggar his rags, and it is the inward qualifications that muſt diſtinguiſh between the one and the other: *Dives* and *Lazarus* when they come to ſtand on even ground, ſhall by theſe be tried, and ſo muſt all,

all, by what means or titles ſoever they have been dignifyed, diſtinguiſhed or called: it is our works and worth, not our wealth will follow us; whereever thou ſeeſt Chriſt in any, own him; for God will own him; eſteem grace in the ſoul more then money in the purſe, and the robes of righteouſneſs above the moſt coſtly jewels, a drachm of grace is worth thouſands of gold and ſilver; for thy councellors take the wiſeſt not the wealthieſt; for wiſdom and wealth many times dwell not together in the ſame houſe; eſteem that preacher beſt that ſpeaks home to the heart, and conſcience, not him that ſeeks to tickle the ear and pleaſe the fancy, he that woos for Chriſt and not for himſelf, and ſeeks to put the crown upon his head and not his own: eſteem that Sermon beſt where thou findeſt moſt of Chriſt, and not that which is dreſt with gaudy notions, and rhetorical flouriſhes, which ſerve to darken and not illuſtrate the matter, and are as king *James* was wont to ſay, like red and blew flowers, fine to look upon, good for little, but peſter the corn: a diſeaſed man had rather have *medicum ſanantem quam eloquentem*, one that will rather do well then ſpeak well: oh my God, ſhould I cover my prophanneſs or hypocriſy with the vizor of ſeeming holineſs, thou wilt ſoon diſcover it, and unmaſk me,

for

for thou *ſearcheſt the heart, and trieſt the reins,* and all things are open and apparent to thee: Lord, give me ſincerity, and truth in the inward part, for this is thy gift; make me ſuch as thy own ſoul delights in; let me not be deceived by my own deceitful heart, nor think to deceive others, for I cannot deceive thy all-ſeeing eye.

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*Upon the conſtant ſupply the vegetables need.*

33. *Med.* WHen I ſeriouſly conſidered that theſe beautiful creatures which now adorn the earth with their flowers, and enamel it with their various ſhapes and colours, and enrich it with their odours, vertues, and operations, yet without a conſtant ſupply of mans labour, pains and diligence, and alſo of the influences of the heavens, they would ſoon wither, die, and come to nothing; ſome of them muſt be yearly ſet, or ſown, or tranſplanted, others preſerved, both from heat and cold, and all need ſome manure, care, and pains, weeding, watering, fencing, or other cares: this minded me of the condition of all earthy delights or enjoyments, they muſt be renewed, or they will ſoon vaniſh; all things by ſin are become ſubject to decay; there is a viciſſitude of earthly comforts, and a conſtant

stant change: Mans life cannot be preserved without food, and physick, and other necessaries, the four Elements, fire, air, earth, and water, are so necessary that if either be denied, mans life is at an end: the houses we dwell in must be repaired, or they will soon come to ruine, and fall about our ears. The most famous fabricks that ever the Sun saw, are come to ruine. The *Piramides* of *Egypt*, the walls of *Carthage*, the tomb of *Mansolus*; or if there were any thing more famous or more durable, yet time hath consumed, and brought it to a ruinous heap; the most impregnable castle, the most invincible strong-hold, if not repaired by labour and industry, time levels with the ground: we cannot say now of our garments, as *Moses* of *Israels* cloaths, *Deut.* 8. 4. *thy rayment waxed not old, neither did thy foot swell this forty years*; it was not the worse for the wearing; but as some imagine, probably it grew as their bodies did, they needed not to trouble themselves with anxious thoughts, what to eat, or what to drink, or wherewith to be cloathed; God brought them food to their tent-doors, and provided rayment without their care or pains, but with us all such comforts must be renewed with care and diligence, with a care of the head, though not of the heart, or they will quickly be gone: this consideration made me

think

think what a great deal of confusion sin had brought into the world, and subjected all things to vanity, and vexation of spirit: *every thing* (saith *Solomon*) *is full of labour*, for as it brought death into the world, so likewise all other miseries; had it not been for sin we had never had aking head, or aking heart, or loss, or cross, or any thing to molest us; and now every thing becomes a trouble: *man is born to trouble* (saith *Job*) *as the sparks fly upwards*; yet alass, how doth the world bewitch men, that they had rather be drudges, and savages here, and moil and toil, and cark and care, and live as it were in a dungeon, and work as in the very fire, then die and come to God; this they make their portion, this is their delight, and all that they care for; they sell their ease, their pleasure, and their very souls: oh earth, how dost thou bewitch us! O satan, how dost thou infatuate us! oh heart, how dost thou deceive us! what disappointments doth foolish men meet with here, and yet will take no warning? we never did finde content, and yet we are always promising our selves happinesse here, where never any yet could finde it: alass, what proportion is there between a piece of gold, and an immortal soul? Oh my soul, canst thou love this sin which hath brought all this misery and confusion

into the world ? canſt thou hug this viper in thy boſome which will ſting thee to eternal death, if not kil'd and mortified ? and canſt thou place thy happineſs in theſe vaniſhing periſhing and withering vanities ? will theſe ſerve thy turn, or boot thy needs, or make thee happy ? can they pay thy debts, or ſave thy ſoul ? alaſs, they cannot, they cannot procure thee one days reſpite out of hell, or one days freedome from ſickneſs, or from death ; they cannot give thee any ſatisfaction here, for content grows not in the worlds garden ; there are indeed joys worth having, pleaſures worth minding, and riches worth labouring for, happineſs that ſhall never have an end, that are not ſubject to changes, nor viciſſitudes, as earthly enjoyments are, but they are to be ſought for above, in the enjoyment of God, in whoſe preſence alone true happineſs dwells : The happineſs the world promiſeth are meer deluſions, a little honey, and many ſtings, a little bitter ſweet pleaſures, that periſheth ere it bud ; *in the midſt of laughter, the heart is ſorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heavineſs* ; their joy is but like the crackling of thorns under a pot, ſoon in, ſoon out ; if thou wilt trade, let it be in a ſurer commodity, and not with the merchant, have, *fortunam rudentibus aptam*, thy eſtate depending winde

and

and weather; if thou wilt be planting, let it be in a better soil, and not where thorns and thistles are like to be thy reward: there is a treasure to be had, a pearl of great price to be bought, *Mat.* 13. 44, 45. whosoever deals in these cannot lose by them; in comparison of which, pearls and diamonds and precious rubies, are not to be named; these are they that make the soul rich, all other riches doth it no good, this makes it rich to God, and lovely, comely, amiable in his sight; oh my God, give me this treasure, and it sufficeth, though I have nothing else; all other things I can spare, Christ I cannot spare: he is the breath of my life, and the life of my soul: let the world take their portion; alass, it is a miserable portion, I envy them not; but Lord, put me not off with such pittifull poor things; let me have an interest in Christ, and communion with him, let me lie for ever in his bosome, and let the enjoyment of him be my portion; let me be an inhabitant in the city of pearl, where no dirty dog shall tread, upon the pavement, my heart pants after this, as the chased hart after the water-brooks; when Lord shall I come and appear before thee, *come Lord Jesus, come quickly.*

*Upon the ſudden withering of flowers.*

34. *Med.* WHen I beheld the beauty, ſplendour and glory of ſeveral herbs and flowers, and other vegetables, when they were in their pride, and in their prime, and invited all eyes to behold them, and to do them homage, and when I conſidered withall, how ſhort-lived they were, how ſoon they withered, vaniſhed, and periſhed, and their glory paſſed away, and came to nothing, I thought this was a fit embleme to ſet forth humane frailty, and the worlds glory by; for both are tranſitory and vain; for man himſelf who is Lord of theſe flowers, he ſoon fades, and is withered, as a flower, yea, many times in the flower of his age; how frequently doth the Scripture compare man to the graſs, and to the flower of the field, which this day flouriſheth, and to morrow fadeth; *their glorious beauty is as a fading flower, and as the haſty fruit before the ſummer,* &c. *Eſay.* 28. 1, 4. *all fleſh is graſs, and all the glory of man is as the flower of graſs, the graſs withereth, and the flower fadeth away,* 1 *Pet.* 1. 24. *man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down, he fleeth alſo as a ſhadow, and continueth not, Job.* 14. 1, 2.

14. 1, 2. Now they are freſh and flouriſhing, and ſudenly they decline: now in the heigth of youthfull vanity, and ſudenly they paſs away, *and the place that knew them, ſhall know them no more*: if they live, cares and fears, ſickneſs and old age ſucceed, of which they are forc't to ſay, *they have no pleaſure in them*; death it ſelf many times calls men off the ſtage, when they think they have but begun to act their parts, and puts an *exit* to them, and their work is done, and their part ended. But ſuppoſe life were more certain, yet our earthly enjoyments and our happineſs here are tranſitory and vain, and all the felicity the world brags of, is but a meer fancy, and a very cheat, at the beſt: it is but a mixture of ſweet and ſowr, a little honey and a great deal of gall, *and the end of that mirth is heavineſs*; if the happineſs be ſuch what is the miſery? man himſelf is but a bubble, how great ſoever he may ſeem, and with what titles ſoever he be dignified, and ſoon ſhall he be prickt by death, and the winde let out, and then a great bubble, and a little one cannot be diſtinguiſhed, and all the pleaſures which vain man takes in, all his youthful follies, is but like a buſh of thorns, and wiſp of ſtraw on fire, make a ſudden blaze, and is forthwith extinguiſhed; they make a noiſe for a while,

and then vaniſh into ſmoak: youthfull pleaſures are ſoon over, and carking care treads out their ſteps, and old age makes them forgotten; youth is like young lambs, they leap and friſk awhile, while they have the dug to run to when they are hungry, but when they are once weaned, and ſet to ſhift for themſelves, the ſport is over; ſo youth under their parents providence, minde their ſports, but when once at their own proviſion, cares and pains, ſpoil the mirth, and make it little minded: The world alſo frowns and ſmiles upon the ſame man, many times the ſame day, and uſeth him as a *tennisball*, now lifts him up, and ſudenly caſts him down, raiſeth him to the top of honour, and then plungeth him into the gulph of diſgrace; Now it ſhews him abundance of riches, and then pincheth him with extremity of poverty; now it mixeth him a cup with pleaſure, and preſently fills it with gall and wormwood; that which the world calls pleaſures and for which ſo many ſell their ſouls, are but like thoſe of the drunkard, that laſt but while he is ſwallowing the drink, and then ſucceeds belchings, and vomitings, ſickneſs and ſorrow, wallowing in the mire, and ſuch like; or like that of the adulterer, which is often attended with pains, aches, rottenneſs, filthy diſeaſes, not

fit

fit to be named, and death it ſelf, and indeed theſe two beaſtly ſins have much of that which the world calls pleaſure, but the effects ſhew it is wrong named; ſickneſs ſucceeds health, and deformity beauty, ſorrow treads upon the heels of pleaſure, and adverſity follows proſperity, and there is a viciſſitude and change in all humane affairs; he is a ſtranger in the world, that knows not theſe things: *David* tells us, *Pſal.* 37 35. *I have ſeen the wicked in great power, and ſpreading himſelf like a green bay-tree, yet he paſſed away, and lo he was not, yea, I ſought him, but he could not be found*, whether he have reference to *Saul* and his family, I know not, yet in the next generation, how was his family, and *bloudy houſe*, (as God calls it 2 *Sam.* 21. 1.) ſtrangely rooted out: oh my ſoul, are all theſe things ſo vain and tranſitory, what is the reaſon then that thou ſets out thy affections ſo much upon them, and concerneſt thy ſelf ſo much above them, *and ſpendeſt thy money for that which is not bread, and thy labour for that which ſatisfieth not*, and moileſt and toyleſt, and carkeſt, and careſt for them, in the neglect of more neceſſary concerns; why art thou ſo taken with them when thy buſineſs ſucceeds, and when thy periſhing goard proſpers? and why art thou ſo troubled when it withers? why art thou ſo

affected with the worlds ſmiles, and knows that *Syren*-like, when moſt ſhe fawns, ſhe moſt intends a wrack? why art thou ſo troubled at a croſs providence, as if thy happineſs did conſiſt in theſe enjoyments, and in the mean while, when thou haſt croſſes and loſſes in thy ſpiritual ſtate, and nothing there proſpers, thou layeſt it not to heart? when God withholds the rain from the ground thou art affected, when he withholds the dew of heaven from thy ſoul thou regardeſt it not, why art thou ſo good a husband for thy body, and ſo bad for thy ſoul? is not the ſoul of greater concernment? Do theſe outward things really go to the making up of thy happineſs, or is not the maintaining of communion with God, of much greater concernment? if thou loſeſt a days work in the field thou art troubled, but haſt thou not loſt many a days work in the congregation, and heard many a Sermon, and madſt little uſe of it? and is this nothing to thee? oh my God, this bewitching world, this crafty devil, and this deceitful heart of mine, hath conſpired my ruine, and without thy aſſiſtance will accompliſh it; oh my folly! that I ſhould ſo affect what I know to be vain, and tranſitory, and to ſignify nothing to my eternal happineſs: Lord, wean me from the world, and engage my affections to thy ſelf, give me an underſtanding heart,

that

that I may expect no more from the world then it can perform, nor ſpend no more time upon it then it will recompenſe me for; and though the world muſt have my head, and my hands, Lord, keep my heart diſengaged, let me lodge none there but my husband Chriſt.

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*Upon the ſympathy and antipathy of vegetables.*

35. *Med.* WHen I conſidered the ſympathy, and antipathy that is obſerved to be between ſome vegetables which the *Naturaliſts* treat of, and the Philoſophers call *occulta qualitatis*, for which no reaſon can be given, when ſome had rather die then live and grow together, and others never thrive well excepte they are planted near one to the other: the like antipathy we may obſerve among ſenſitive creatures, where one kinde ſeeks the deſtruction of another, and others love and delight each in other; nay, ſomething of this may be ſeen where is neither life nor ſence, as in fire and water, and the ſtrange ſimpathy between the *loadſtone* and the iron, between the jet and the ſtraw, *&c.* This conſideration minded me of the ſtrange antipathy between the ſeed of the ſerpent and the ſeed of the woman, mentioned

*Gen.*

*Gen.* 3. 15. *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy ſeed and her ſeed*; I conſidered alſo, of the *ſympathy* between Gods own people, the former is lively expreſſed, by the antipathy that Naturaliſts obſerve to be in the *Panther* to a man, that bears ſuch a perfect hatred to him, that he will race out his image, if he ſee it upon a wall: In wicked men, there is ſo perfect a hatred to God, that they will, if they can poſſibly, race out the very image of God, whereever they ſee it: They hate every thing that God loves, love every thing that he hates; they hate every thing that is like him, and that for this very reaſon becauſe it is like him; now no reaſon can be given of this, why they ſhould hate this God, who is goodneſs it ſelf, who is alſo their creator, and their great benefactor, from whom they have their life, and breath, and being, their food, and rayment, their limbs, and ſences, their health and ſtrength, their peace and plenty, without whom they cannot ſpeak, nor ſtir, nor live a moment, and yet this is the caſe of all wicked men on earth, however croſs each to other, in their principles, and contrary in their diſpoſitions, if they agree in nothing elſe, yet they agree in this, to oppoſe the power of godlineſs; *Herod* and *Pilate* can both conſent

ſent that innocent Chriſt ſhall be put to death; though wicked men like ſnarling dogs, are worrying one another, yet joyn againſt the trembling hare; ſo though they worry each other, yet all agree againſt an holy man; let a godly man be of never ſo pleaſing a diſpoſition, and winning carriage, never ſo open-hearted, and open-handed, yet this one ingredient holineſs ſpoils all in the worlds account, and renders him hatefull and contemptible in their eyes, and the groſſeſt drunkard, ſwearer, and adulterer ſhall be preferred before him; Chriſt himſelf, though *never man ſpake like him, and no guile was found in his mouth*, yet a ſeditious murderer, *Barrabbas* was preferred before him; oh the degenerate eſtate of poor man, whither art thou fallen? is the chiefeſt good become the object of thy chiefeſt hatred? and is holineſs wherein thou waſt created, and which is Gods image, without which thou canſt never be ſaved, become thy ſcorn, and more contemptible then the image of the devil? is the devil become the better Maſter? and is his work the better work? and will alſo his wages be the better wages? well, praiſe in the parting; the time is coming, thy judgment will be altered, and thou wilt be glad to eat thoſe words, that now thou ſpeakeſt againſt the power of godlineſs: I know all men are not actually perſecutors,

perſecutors, but no thanks to them; they have the ſame nature, and have an aking tooth againſt holineſs, but for the preſervation of his people, the Lord reſtrains them; thus he did *Abimelech*, *Gen.* 20. 6. *I withheld thee from ſinning againſt me, therefore ſuffered I not thee to touch her*; *and Laban*, God ſaid unto him, *take heed that thou ſpeak not unto* Jacob *either good or bad*, *Gen.* 31. 24. *viz.* neither by flattery, nor force, by allurement, or affrightment, to bring him back; God ſpake for him in the heart of his enemy. The ſympathy alſo that is amongſt the children of God, was minded by me, they are ſons of the ſame father, and heirs of the ſame inheritance, and therefore ſhould be *kindly affectioned one to another*, *Rom.* 12. 10. *arctior eſt copula cordis quam corporis*, they are brethren in *Adam*, according to the fleſh, and brethren in Chriſt according to the ſpirit; *they rejoyce with them that do rejoyce, and weep with them that weep*, Rom. 12. 15. *cum plangentibus plango*, ſaith *Cyprian*, *cum deflentibus defleo*; this is that *brotherly love* which the Apoſtle bids *to continue*, *Heb.* 13. 1. the communion with God, and the communion of Saints is heaven upon earth; believers are members of the myſtical body of Chriſt, and it is with believers as with members in the natural body, they have the ſame care one for another; *if one ſuffer, all ſuffer*; *and if one*

*be*

*be honoured, all rejoyce*; 1 *Cor.* 12. 25, 26. they are like lute-ſtrings, if one be ſtrucken, all the reſt ſound; but more clear this ſympathy would be, if it were not for the remaining corruption that is in us; oh my ſoul, doſt thou meet with hardſhip in the world, wonder not at it, thou art in an enemies Countrey, the world will love her own, but never loved Chriſt, nor any of his: haſt thou broke ſatans priſon, no wonder if there be *hue and cry* ſent after thee, to bring thee back; the ſeed of the woman, and the ſeed of the ſerpent did never yet agree; Chriſt hath told thee, *in the world thou ſhalt have tribulation, yet be of good comfort, he hath overcome the world*: this world is the Saints purgatory, not paradice; and why ſhouldſt thou expect pleaſure, it is like the ſtraights of *Magellan*, where it is obſerved, which way ſoever a man bends his courſe out, the winde will be againſt him; it is an own mother to the wicked, but a ſtep-mo-to the godly, and will ſtarve them if their father lookt not to them; the godly and the wicked fight under two captains, the one under the banner of Chriſt, the other under the devils ſtandard, and therefore there is no hopes of reconciliation; fire and water are not more contrary, then Chriſt and *Belial*; oh my ſoul, manifeſt thy ſelf the ſeed of the woman, not by making peace,

but

but by maintaining war with Chriſts enemies, and by ſympathizing with his children; *mourn with thoſe that mourn, and rejoyce with thoſe that rejoyce, and be like affectioned one to another*: like the members of the ſame body; when one is diſtempered, the other ſuffers; when one ſtands in need, all the reſt yield their help and aſſiſtance. Oh my God, is there ſuch an antipathy in the hearts of wicked men againſt thine image in the hearts of thy people? what cauſe have we to admire thy patience that ſuffereſt ſuch enemies to live upon the face of the earth, and feedeſt, and maintaineſt them at thy own coſt and charge, and what cauſe have I to admire that thou beareſt with me ſo long, when I was in that relation, and what cauſe have we to admire thy wiſdom, and power in preſerving a handful of thy people, like lambs, in the midſt of numerous wolves, that ſeek their deſtruction, when for ought we know there are hundreds to one againſt them, that vow their deſtruction: Lord, let me manifeſt my ſelf to be thine, by my antipathy to ſin, and the works of darkneſs, and my ſympathy with the godly thoſe children of light.

36. *Med.* WHen I conſidered the marigold and ſundry other flowers in the garden, that cloſed in the evening and opened in the morning, and all the day turned their heads according to the courſe of the ſun, as if they ſcorned any other beauty, and would admit of no other ſuitor, and as if no temptation could divert them from their beloved, from whom they received their life and being, and in the winter when the ſun is remote, they bury themſelves in the ground, and diſappear; I thought this much reſembles a Chriſtian, when he acts like a Chriſtian, and is a fit embleme of grace in the ſoul; for a gracious ſoul as he ſcorns to make love to any other but God, ſo he ſcorns that proffered love that others make to it, or to entertain any in competition with Chriſt, from whom he receiveth life, and breath, and being: In all a gracious man doth, Chriſt is in his eye, and if he can pleaſe him, he matters not who is offended, his eye is always upon Chriſt, as theſe flowers have their eye upon their beloved ſun; his heart runs out to him, and ſcorns to open to any other; when God is preſent, the heart is expatiated; when abſent, it is contracted, he retires himſelf then into

into himself, and thinks there is no company worth having; he depends upon him as a childe doth upon his fathers providence, and fears not want, so long as *there is bread enough in his fathers house*: and as he draws out all from God, so he draws out all for God, and for his service; heart, and hand, and tongue, and all shall be employed for him; there is not a dram of love in the heart, but it shall run in this channel, he shall have it; if he have a tongue to speak, it shall speak for God; if a hand to act, it shall act for him; and all he can do, seems too little for him; a gracious soul that is espoused to Christ behaves her self like a chast wife to her beloved husband. When suitors come to wooe for her affections, they shall have a peremptory deniall; my affections are set already, I cannot, I will not remove them; my vows are upon me, I cannot yeild; I have devoted my self to my husband, and will not prove false; and it is her trouble she is forced to hear such solicitations, and temptations: it is so with the soul, she repels with disdain the temptations and allurements laid before her; the devil knocks by his temptations, she will not answer, the world knocks, she will not open; riches, honours, friends and favourites cannot prevail: such a spirit was in *Jerome*, *though my father* (saith he) *lay upon his knees before*

*before me; and my mother hanged about my neck, and my brethren and ſiſters lay in my way, to keep me from Chriſt, I would throw off my father, tread upon my mother, run over my brethren and ſiſters, to come to Chriſt, when he calls me*: a believer is *ſemper idem*, always the ſame, whether with *David* upon the throne, or with *Job* upon the dunghill, or with *Jeremy* in the ſtocks, he will ſtill keep his integrity, as theſe flowers do, whereever planted, in field or garden; however honoured, or deſpiſed, no other benefactour ſhall be owned, but the ſun: when the hypocrite is like the planet *Mercury*, good in a good conjunction, and bad with a bad; a gracious heart is like *Lot*, good in *Sodom*, temperate amidſt the intemperate; or like *Noah*, upright in a ſinful world; or like *Joſeph*, holy in a ſinful *Egypt*, like the needle in the compaſs, always pointing the ſame way, and never ſettles in a wrong point, however diſturbed by a jog of temptation, like clear water in a glaſs, which remains clear after all the ſhaking, when the hypocrite hath mud in the bottom, which is diſcovered by the ſtirring; oh my ſoul, is it thus with thee? art thou as faithful to this *ſun of righteouſneſs* as theſe poor flowers are to their beloved, that will admit neither moon nor ſtars, nor any other lover to have any room in their affections, nor any favour in their eye, nor

one pleasing look or cast of their head, dost thou point right for heaven, and can no jog of temptation divert thee, or make thee settle in a wrong point? If so, how comes it to pass, that thou art so much taken with the worlds glory, that not only thy eyes, but thy heart goes after it? why art thou so bewitched with her smiles, and so cast down with her frowns? why hast thou so few serious thoughts of God, and so few glimps of him, even in the ordinances? were thy heart in order, thou wouldst always have Christ in thine eye, both in thy heavenly and earthly imployments, and wouldst soon be sensible when the sun of righteousness was either clouded, ecclypsed, or set upon thee; as these flowers are in the like case; if thou art why dost thou not mourn and hang the head in his absence as they do in the like case? they will another day rise up against thee and condemn thee, as being more faithful to their benefactour, then thou art to thy husband: oh my God, I am sensible of my guilt, and the faithfulness of these flowers shames me, for my unfaithfulness; they have but a natural instinct to incline them to their benefactor, and own him, but I have reason and Scripture, yea, my vows are upon me, and engage me to my husband Christ; Lord, divert my affections from the world, which doth

doth but flatter me, to deceive me, incline my heart to Christ that would save me and make me happy; *let neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other creature be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus my Lord, nor rend me out of his arms, nor draw my affections from him.*

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*Upon a rose among thorns.*

37. *Med.* WHen I beheld and considered, how the rose grew and flourished, and came to perfection amongst the thorns and prickles that surrounded it, and was not hurt, but rather defended by them, and kept and preserved from their other enemies, I thought it represented the Church here in the world; for as here, there are a thousand prickles for one rose, and yet this rose is preserved, so in the world, it may probably be conjectured, there are a thousand wicked men, which are compared to thorns, for one that is godly; the Church in her militant condition, while she is in the world, is compared to the lilly among the thorns, *Cn.* 2. 2. *as the lilly among the thorns* (saith Christ) *so is my love among the daughters*: these are indeed as the *Gibbimits, pricks in their eyes,*

*and thorns in their ſides*: yet not altogether uſeleſs: wicked men are called briars, *Micah.* 7. 4. *the beſt of them is a briar, and the moſt upright ſharper then a thorny hedge*; and God threatens to *fold them together as thorns, and burn them as dry ſtubble, Nahum.* 1. 10. *Iſay.* 27. 4. but theſe briars are not uſeleſs, he hedges us about with them, that he may keep us in compaſs; he pricks us with theſe thorns, that he may let out ill humours; and happy thorns to us, if they open a vein for ſin to guſh out: his houſe of correction is his ſchool of inſtruction, *Pſal.* 94. 12. whether the roſe in the creation, was thus guarded and fenced, I know not; ſome think theſe thorns alſo are a fruit of the curſe, yet ſure I am, before the fall the Church was not peſtered with ſuch thorns as now it is: man before the fall had not the nature and property of thorns; but as thorns by Gods providence are made ſerviceable for the defence of better fruit, ſo the wicked often prove ſerviceable to the Church, and a defence to better men; but no thank to them, but to the overruling providence of God, God preſerves his people from their rage, and makes them dwell ſafe by them, as lambs among wolves, and not only ſo, but makes one wolf to defend them from another, or ſets one wolf to worry another; while the lambs eſcape: the *Gibionites* though

though briars and thorns, were yet uſefull to *Iſrael, and the earth helpt the woman, and ſwallowed up the flouds which the dragon caſt out of his mouth after her, Rev.* 12. 16. As the *Perſians* and others, drink up the floud, which the Turk at this day threatens to overwhelm all Chriſtendome with: The *Philiſtins* though briars and thorns, are a defence to *David*, when he was perſecuted by *Saul*, and in a great ſtrait, being compaſſed round about by *Sauls* army; in that nick of time they invaded the land, and *Saul* and his army drew back, 2 *Sam.* 23. 27. wicked *Pharaoh* gave entertainment to *Jacob*, and his family, and made proviſion for them in the ſeaven years famine; and *David* and his fellows were promoted by a wicked man: ſo was *Mordicai* and the *Jewes*; and the *Barbarians* ſhewed *Paul no little kindneſs*, *Acts.* 28. 2. and ſometimes the ſheep finde ſhelter under a thorny hedge, yet the nature of wicked men is not to do good but to rent and tear; but God alters their nature, at leaſt reſtraineth their rage, for his peoples ſake. The Church of God is as a *buſh burning, but not conſumed*; for when potent Princes have ſought their deſtruction, God hath fruſtrated their deſignes; ſometimes by ſetting the dogs to worry one another, the poor hare eſcapes; ſo *Geball* and *Ammon, and the inhabitants*

*habitants of Mount Seir*, deſtroy each other, when they had decreed to deſtroy *Iſrael*, 2 *Chron.* 20. 23. and the counſell could not agree againſt *Paul*, *Act.* 23. 7. God maintaineth *Noah* againſt a world of wicked men, and *Lot* in the midſt of *Sodom*, and *Iſrael* in *Egypt*, and *Mordicai* againſt *Haman*, and all his enemys; and oft gives them favour in the eyes of thoſe, that were they not reſtrained, would become their mortall enemies, and their bloudy perſecutors; God turning thoſe thorns which would devour them, into a defence for them, and into a hedge for his peoples ſecurity: Oh my ſoul admire the providence and wiſdome of God, that can bring light out of darkneſs, order out of confuſion, good out of evill, and can turn a curſe into a bleſſing, and make his Churches enemies to become their friends: thou waſt one of thoſe thorns, and thy nature was as bad, and if God hath taken thee off the ſtock of nature, and planted thee in that choiſe vine, bleſs his name, it was no thanks to thee; If now thou art a *roſe* though encompaſſed by a thouſand thorns, he will defend thee; *If thy ways pleaſe God, thy enemies themſelves ſhall be at peace with thee, Pro.* 16. 7. ſin is the only make-bate between God, and the ſoul, and if God have a controverſy with the ſinner, all the creatures

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are preſently up in arms to bring in the rebel, and wait but for a commiſſion to take away his life; but if God be reconciled to thee, no enemy can hurt thee; *no weapon formed againſt his Church ſhall ever proſper, Eſay.* 54. 17. When *Jacob* had made his peace with God, neither *Laban* nor *Eſau* could quarrel with him, though it is thought both came forth with murderous intentions; a godly man ſhall be *in league with the ſtones of the field, and the beaſt of the field ſhall be at peace with him, Job.* 5. 23. *fear not little flock,* (ſaith Chriſt) *it is your fathers good pleaſure to give you a kingdome,* and it is better be of the little number of roſes, then the great number of thorns: it is better be with *Noah* in the *ark*, then with the whole world in the flood, and to go to heaven alone, then to hell with company; if thou art a *roſe*, ere long thou ſhalt be put into Chriſts boſome; if thou art a thorn, ere long thou ſhalt be caſt into the fire; oh my God, I am wilde by nature, if grapes grow on thorns, or figs on thiſtles, it is thy doing to alter the ſtock, and tranſplant it: if I be a thorn, Lord, change my nature: if I be a roſe, Lord preſerve me in the midſt of mine enemies, till I come to maturity, and then lodge me in thy own boſome.

*Upon a bed of Camomile trampled upon.*

38. *Med.* OBſerving a bed of Camomile, that had been trod and trampled upon, and abuſed by other violence, how it was yet freſh and flouriſhing, green, and fragrant, and ſeemed to me to ſpread the more, and grow the better, and was freſh and well-liking, I thought it much reſembled the Church under affliction, which is often trampled upon by the feet of pride, and often in the furnace of affliction, under hard preſſures, and great calamities, and yet is in a growing condition, nay, never grows better then in affliction, and under a ſuffering condition; and though lying among the pots, is yet black, but comely: In perſecuting times they grow beſt, and thrive moſt; In times of proſperity they are apt to forget their maker, and with *Jeſurun, to wax fat and kick*, and lift up the heel againſt him; but in adverſity *they ſeek him early*: in proſperity they are like young mulets, when they have ſucked *matrem talcibus petivit*, they kick the dug that nouriſhes them, ſo they forget the God that feeds them; fulneſs breeds forgetfulneſs, yea, wontonneſs: the moſt poiſonous flies are bred in the ſweeteſt fruits: As *Salvian* in his time obſerves, proſperi-

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ty was the Churches bane; there are many with the full fed hawk, forget their Maſter, and are like the moon at the full, furtheſt from the ſun, and moſt like to ſuffer an eclipſe; when they are at eaſe, like wanton cattle, they puſh each other; but when the dogs bark the ſheep run together: *Iſrael* in *Egypt* under their hard task-maſters did encreaſe and multiply, and of ſeventy two, in a few ages come to be ſix hundred thouſand fighting men; but when they were freed from this bondage, and were in the wilderneſs, they murmured againſt God, and of all thoſe in the ſpace of forty years, but only two remained alive, and many died by an untimely death: In the primitive times, never any people under the ſun met with more oppoſition, and all the means the devil and his inſtruments could invent, were uſed to deſtroy them, as you may reade at large in the hiſtory of the ten bloudy perſecutions, and yet *the blood of the Martyrs* proved *the ſeed of the Church*, and the more they were oppoſed the faſter they encreaſed; as it is ſaid of the Palm-tree, the more it is preſſed down, the more it ariſeth, ſo may it truly be ſaid of the Church, or as ſome ſay of the walnut-tree, the more it is beaten, the more fruit it bears, ſo it is with many Chriſtians, *It is good*, (ſaith David) *that I was afflicted, before I was afflicted*

*flicted I went aſtray, but now I learn to keep thy commandments.* In *Athanaſius* time the Church was at a low ebb, the *Arian* hereſy had overrun, and overſpred the face of Chriſtendom, and the orthodox party were under a cruel perſecution, more cruel ( ſay ſome ) then any was under the heathen Emperours, yet all the darkneſs of hell, could not put out the light that then remained, but it ſtill gathered ſtrength till the clouds were ſcattered, and the ſun broke forth again in his ſtrength: In *Luthers* days the Pope, and all the ſmoke that aſcends out of the bottomleſs pit, yea, all the powers of darkneſs, could not put out the ſpark that was then kindled, nor all the flouds the dragon powred out of his mouth quench it: In Queen *Marys* days, fire and faggot could not quench the light of the Goſpel, and to this day the more it is oppoſed, the more it proſpers, yea, particular Chriſtians may finde perſecuting times to be the moſt growing ſeaſons; however by this winde of perſecution, much chaff is blown away, and in the furnace much droſs diſcovered, and reprobate ſilver, yea, the good wheat is thereby cleanſed, and the gold purified. *It was good for me* ( ſaith *David* ) *that I was afflicted*; *it is good for a man* ( ſaith the lamenting Church ) *to bear the yoak in his youth*, *Lam.* 3. 27, oh my ſoul, thou haſt

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been long in the furnace of affliction, what benefit doſt thou finde? is thy droſs conſumed, and thy corruption waſted? *or is the bellows burnt, the lead conſumed? and hath the founder melted in vain?* (as God complains) *Jer.* 6. 29. thou haſt been oft fanned, what chaff is driven away? thou haſt been trampled upon with the camomile, doſt thou grow and ſpread the better? preſſed down with the *Palm-tree*, doſt thou riſe the higher? beaten with the *Walnut-tree*, doſt thou bear the more? what account canſt thou give of all the afflictions that God hath laid upon thee? if none, why may not God give thee up as incorrigible? like thoſe, *Jer.* 2. 30. *in vain have I ſmitten your children, they received no correction*, *Eſay.* 1. 5. *why ſhould you be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more*: think it not ſtrange if God lay on heavier ſtrokes where others will not ſerve, and give ſtronger phyſick where gentler will not work; *David* muſt be baniſhed, *Job* deprived of all, *Joſeph* wrongfully caſt into priſon, *Jeremy* in the dungeon, *Paul* and *Silas* in the ſtocks, and the *Martyrs* be brought to the ſtake, theſe are the pills which our heavenly father preſcribed to them, for the purging out of groſs humours, and reſtoring their health, and what wonder if he preſcribe any, or all of theſe to thee, who aboundeſt with

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theſe humours more then they ? many a pill thou haſt had, and little fruit appears ; well maiſt thou fear , he will either puniſh thee *ſeven times more*, or leave thee off as incorrigible : oh my God, with correction give inſtruction, or it will not work ; ſpeak that to the heart, that thou ſpeakeſt to the ear, or other ſences ; thou art the only phiſitian of ſouls ; and all others are phyſitians of no value ; thou knoweſt the diſeaſe, and how to cure it ; thou canſt preſcribe the phyſick, and make it effectual ; Lord, be my phyſitian, and leave me not over to any other ; let me not murmure at any of thy preſcriptions , and let not any pill be in vain , nor any twig of thy rod uſeleſs.

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*Upon receiving in of the fruits.*

39. *Med.* AT the end of the yeaꝛ , when I received in the crop , the fruits of the earth , for which I had laboured, and for which I had long waited ; I began to conſider, what a poor reward this is for all my labour, if I muſt expect no more ; and what a ſad condition poor labouring men are in, that moil, and toil, and cark and care, and have much ado for bread to eat, and cloaths to put on ; and this

this is their all, yea, they run in arrears to God for this also, and are like to be cast into prison for ever; and yet we may see the folly of the most, they take no care for any other riches, but frame to themselves a poor pittifull happiness, in these, and are never like to have any pleasure here, or hereafter, but what they fancy to themselves in some sinfull vanity: the receiving in of these fruits of the earth as the reward of my labour, put me in minde of the reward which believers shall receive at the last day, at the hand of God, for all the labour, toil and trouble, they have had, which will be a better recompense then the earth can give the husbandman for his pains: *let us not then be weary of well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not, Gal. 6. 9. he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting, ver.* 8. he that cares only to feather his nest, store up riches, fit the back, and fill the belly, and lets the soul sink or swim, he is like to have a miserable harvest, but *they that sow in tears shall reap in joy; he that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoycing, bringing his sheaves with him, Psal.* 126. 5, 6. *Be patient therefore brethren* (saith the Apostle) *till the coming of the Lord, behold the husbandman waiteth*

*waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth, and hath long patience for it, till he receiveth the early and the latter rain; be you also patient, stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, Jam.* 5.7,8. Now believers sow the seed, and water it with their tears, but it is not long before the reward comes; *behold I come quickly* (saith Christ) *and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be, Rev.* 22.12. hold out faith and patience (saith the Martyr) your work will presently be at an end; hope holds up the husbandmans heart, and may much more the Christians: these things also put me in minde of the great harvest, at the end of the world, when the great husbandman shall send out his servants, the angels, to reap down his field, and gather in his corn, *Mat.* 13. 38. *the field is the world, the good seed are the children of the kingdom, the tares are the children of the wicked one, the enemy that sows them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the world, the reapers are the angels, as therefore the tares are gathered together, and burnt in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world:* the day is coming that all shall be brought to judgment, and the precious shall be seperated from the vile, the good corn shall be brought into the barn, but the tares are reserved for the fire; the tares and the wheat may grow together in one field, but

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ſhall never lodge together in the ſame barn, for as the tares cannot well be weeded out, which in the blade (ſome ſay) much reſemble the wheat, and is hardly known, till the fruit appears, ſo though God can diſcern the hypocrite from the ſincere, yet hypocriſy may be ſpun with ſo fine a thread, that the beſt diſcerning Chriſtian can hardly do it; but the time is coming, the angels ſhall know them, and they are not to go into the ſame garner, they muſt be bundled up for the fire, when the wheat muſt be brought into Gods barn: oh my ſoul, what ſeed haſt thou ſown againſt that harveſt? haſt thou ſown to the fleſh, then of the fleſh thou wilt reap corruption? if to the ſpirit, thou wilt of the ſpirit reap life everlaſting? what grain art thou? art thou wheat, or tares? then maiſt thou know whether thou art to go to the fire or into the garner? reſt not ſatisfied till thou know that thou art wheat, and neither with the tares bring forth bad fruit, nor with the chaff fly away with the winde; it is not enough to have a flouriſhing blade, ſo the ſtony ground had, and yet came to nothing: it is not enough to make a profeſſion of religion, ſo the fooliſh virgins did, they had lamps, but no oyl, a profeſſion but no grace; it is not enough to have talents, but thou muſt improve them, or thou wilt be ſentenced to outer darkneſs;

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it is not enough to grow in the ſame field, be manured by the ſame hand, heated by the ſame ſun, and watered with the ſame ſhowers; thus the tares were, but there muſt be good ſeed, well-rooted, ſpringing up, and bearing fruit in thy heart; thou maiſt live under the ſame Miniſter, enjoy the ſame ordinance with the wheat, and yet ſtill be but a tare; oh my God, diſcover my ſelf to my ſelf, and let me not be deceived by a cunning devil, and a deceitful heart; if I be a tare, Lord, let me know it ere it be too late, that I may ſow better ſeed in my field, that I may be gathered into thy barn, and not be bundled up with the tares for the fire: let my heart bring forth good fruit fit for the basket, good wheat fit for thy barn, ſolid wheat that may not be blown away with the winde, and much fruit that I may glorify thy name: let me not ſow to the fleſh, but to the ſpirit, that I may not reap corruption but life everlaſting; let me not be deceived in ſo great a buſineſs as the ſalvation of my ſoul.

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*Upon the beating out of the ſeed.*

40. *Med.* WHen I had gathered in the ſeed, and the fruits of the earth, my next work was to make a ſepa-

ration;

ration, the good from the bad, for though ſome ſeparation was already made, and the weeds, and other traſh, were caſt out, and left behinde, yet ſtill there were ſtalks, and husks, and chaff adhering to it; to this end I threſhed, rubbed, pounded or beat it out, according as I ſaw occaſion; for I ſaw it would not out without ſome violence, and that which was moſt ſtubborn, and gave moſt reſiſtance, received moſt blows, till at length my end was obtained, and the ſeparation made; this put me in minde of the neceſſity of affliction, how needful it was for the ſoul, which is peſtered more with chaff and rubbiſh, then any corn can be; *though now* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *for a ſeaſon, if need be, ye are in heavineſs, through manifold temptations*, &c. 1 *Pet.* 1.6. when the heart grows too light, God makes it heavy with manifold temptations, phyſick ſometimes is as neceſſary as food, and conduceth more to our health, the ſoul hath as much need of threſhing and winnowing as the corn; *Solomon* tels us *Pro.* 22. 15. *foeliſhneſs is bound up in the heart of a childe, but the rod of correction will fetch it away*: old *Ely*, for want of this brought up his ſons, to bring down his houſe; a leſſon ſet on with whipping, is beſt remembred: now this is true of men, as well as children, for corruption, and folly remains in them alſo, till God fetch it

out; ſanctified affliction is the way to conſume it: *It was good for me* (ſaith *David*) *that I was afflicted, before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now I learn to keep thy Commandments*: Gods rod as well as his ſtaff, comforted him, *Pſal.* 23. 4. as corn muſt be threſhed, winnowed, ground, and baked, before it is fit for uſe, or good for food, ſo by affliction men are fitted for Gods ſervice here, and for glory hereafter, yet as ſome corn requires not ſo much threſhing as others doth, yet all muſt have ſome, ſo ſome men need not ſo much affliction as others, though ſome be neceſſary, but he that gives man underſtanding in the one, beſt knows what is neceſſary for the other, *Iſay.* 28. 24. *doth the plowman plow all day to ſow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground, when he hath made plain the face thereof? doth he not caſt abroad the fetches, and ſcatter the cummin, and the appointed barly and rye in their place? for his God doth inſtruct him to diſcretion, and doth teach him, for the fetches are not threſhed with a threſhing-inſtrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin, but the fetches are beaten out with a ſtaff, and the cummin with a rod, bread-corn is bruiſed*, &c. he that gives man wiſdom, ſhall not he underſtand? the great husbandman that inſtructs others, will not lay on more ſtroaks, or heavier, then needs muſt; the goldſmith ſuffers not his gold to lie in the furnace one hour longer then

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is requisite ; *God observes when his work is done upon* Mount-Zion, *and then will punish the stout heart of the King of* Assiria, *Esay.* 10. 12. we are apt to be playing in the dust, and minde not our fathers house, and till we are frightned, or beaten, we shall not return home, but minde our sport: the prodigal mindes not his father, while he had any thing left to eat: *oh death how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that lives at ease in his possession, and hath nothing to vex him, but hath prosperity in all things, Eccles.* 41. 1. physick (as I said) is sometimes as necessary as food, and sickness as health, and poverty as plenty, we are apt to surfet on sweet-meats; our heavenly father who is the best physitian, knows best what is best for us; were we to choose our food, and our physick, we should kill our selves; sometimes he prepares a diet-drink for us, and mixeth it with our tears, *Psal.* 42. 3. *my tears have been my meat day and night, Psal.* 80. 4, 5. *O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people, thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and giveſt them tears to drink in great measure*; he also seasoneth it with their groans, to many, he prescribes also a spare diet, for every man cannot bear a prosperous estate, no more then every mans head can bear much wine; oh my soul, matter not though thou be thresht, and winnowed, and ground, and bak't, so thou

maist be made bread for thy Masters table; all Gods people have tasted of the cup of affliction, and canst thou expect to go free: *Abel* began the round, and drank a health to all his followers, which hitherto they have all pledged, and some of them have drunk very deep, and Christ himself drunk up the very dregs; If God preserve thee, no matter whether it be in salt or sugar: *If thou suffer for him, thou shalt reign with him, and these light afflictions which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. it is but winking (said the Martyr) and we shall be in heaven presently; though thou maist lose something for Christ, thou wilt lose nothing by him, for every handful of muck thou partest with for his sake, thou shalt have a handful of angels: afflictions when once past, are soon forgotten as a womans pangs in childebearing, when a man-childe is born into the world, *John* 16. 21. to which a Christians sufferings are oft resembled, *Esay.* 26. 17. *Jer.* 6. 24. but many Christians mourn, and overmourn for their losses, and become like *Mary Magdalen* blear-eyed, and cannot see Christ for their tears, and think God cannot love them, because he beats them; see how these are mistaken, *Heb.* 12. 6, 7, 8. *whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth; if you endure chastening, God dealeth*

*dealeth with you as with ſons, for what ſon is he that the father chaſteneth not ; but if you be without chaſtizements, whereof all are partakers, then are ye baſtards and not ſons* ; he hath learned little in Chriſtianity that hath not learnt to ſuffer, corrections are pledges of our adoption, and badges of our ſonſhip, one ſon God had without ſin, but none without ſorrow ; *Luther* thought the *Pope* was not Gods ſon, *quod ſine cruce regnat* ; oh my God, whatever affliction lies upon me, never let me have a revolting heart, and if I ſuffer let it be for thee, and not as an evil-doer, if thou haſt appointed ſuffering times for me, Lord, fit me for them with ſuffering graces, and a ſuffering ſpirit : fit the back before thou lay on the burthen ; Lord, give me ſtrength to bear it, and then lay on what thou wilt, and while thou wilt.

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*Upon the winnowing of the ſeed.*

41. *Med.* WHen the ſeed was thus threſht, or beat out, the next work was winnowing it, whereby the chaff and refuſe and lighteſt emptieſt part, was blown away with the winde, but the ſolid ſubſtantiall weighty grain was not hurt by it, but benefitted ; it was refined and purified : I ſaw, what the furnace was to mettle, ſuch is

the fan to the corn, that which seperateth, purgeth, and purifyeth it; this made me compare temporal with spirituals, and to consider, that God hath many ways to purge and try his people, sometimes he casts them into the furnace of affliction, and trys them this way, *others had trials of cruell mockings, and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments*, &c. *Heb.* 11. 36. and sometimes he trys them with the fan, to see what solidity is in them, *the messenger of the Covenant shall come, but who may abide the day of his comming, or who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiners fire and like fullers soap, and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver*, &c. then many a guilded piece will be found counterfeit, and many a glittering professor found to be but a cheat, and much seeming gold prove to be but dross and rubbish, but true gold neither fears the furnace, nor the touchstone; here the sincere Christian and the hypocrite will be differenced, which now are hardly known asunder, and will no longer serve to make up one heap of money; in this world they may grow in the same field, as did the wheat and the tares, they may lie together in the same mow, as the corn and the straw, they may make up the same heap, as the wheat and the chaff, but they shall never lie in the same garner together, for this is reserved for the wheat alone:

alone: here they may benefit one the other, as the ſtraw bears up the wheat, and the chaff and piles defend it from injury, and they are preſerved, ſecured, and fed for the wheats ſake, but hereafter the godly will not need their protection, and the other ſhall not have preſervation: here *the earth helps the woman, and the innocent ſave the Iſland, Job.* 22. 30. *and ſo both ſhall grow together till the harveſt*, but then they ſhall be ſeperated one from another; now there are ſeveral fans, the devil hath his fan, *Luk.*22.31. *and the Lord ſaid, Simon, Simon, behold ſatan hath deſired to have you, that he may ſift you as wheat, but I have prayed, that thy faith fail not*; he challenged him *Goliah*-like, to a ſingle combat, but without leave he cannot do it; 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *be ſober, be vigilant, becauſe your adverſary the devil like a roaring lion walketh about, ſeeking whom he may devour*: his end in ſifting is not to purify but to deſtroy; his *ſieve* holds nothing but refuſe, the beſt runs through; but Gods ſieve preſerves the beſt, and ſevers it from the chaff: there is a fan of ſcoffs, and ſcorns, which is in the hands of wicked men, the devils inſtruments, and much of the lighter chaff is blown away with the winde, and cannot ſtand before it, and there is alſo a fan of perſecution, and this though uſed by men, the devil guides and directs their hands, and this ſtron-

ger blaſt carries almoſt all before it, the ſtony ground could not withſtand it; we have ſeen in our days very much of that which we accounted ſolid grain and principal wheat, hath proved chaff, and if this winde ſhould blow loud, it is like much more would fly; but there is another fan, and that is of errors, and hereſies, and this takes not away the chaff only, but ſome of the lighter ſort of corn, yea, and if poſſible, the very elect; this the Apoſtle warns profeſſors of, that they *be not like children toſſed to and fro with every winde of doctrine*, *Eph.* 4. 14. and how many ſuch giddy hearers are there, that are caſt into what mould the preacher pleaſeth, and like glaſſes, are by the breath blown into any ſhape, but ere long Chriſt himſelf will come, with his fan, *Mat.* 3. 12. *whoſe fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into his garner, but the chaff will he burn with unquenchable fire*; heaven ſpewed out the angels for their apoſtacy, and no unclean thing ſhall ever enter there, nor dirty dog ſhall tread upon that pavement, nor droſs ſhall be mixt with that gold, no water with that ware, nor no chaff with this wheat, but for the chaff, it muſt to the fire, but not be conſumed, *vivere volunt, mori neſciunt, they ſhall ſeek death but ſhall not finde it*, *Rev.* 6. 2. they that once might have had

had life, and would not, now they would have death, but cannot; oh my ſoul, are there trying times to come? wherein grace will be known from its conterfeit, and when the *axe will be put to the root of the tree, and every one that brings not forth good fruit, ſhall be hewn down, and caſt into the fire?* muſt the droſs be conſumed, and the chaff driven away, of the winde? look about thee, that thou be true gold, ſolid grain, and a tree of righteouſneſs, that brings forth good fruit, that thou exceedeſt all hypocrites in the world, and haſt ſomething they have not, and canſt do ſomething they cannot do, that thou maiſt be able to abide the *refiners fire, and the fullers ſoap*; that the houſe of thy profeſſion be built upon the rock, that no winde nor weather, ſtorms nor tempeſts, flouds nor waves of trouble, may moleſt thee; trouble will come, there is no prevention; ſometimes lighter afflictions, as ſmaller rain, and ſometime greater, as the *overflowing of Jordan*; amidſt theſe waves, thy ſhip had need be like the Ark, pitched within and without, yea, thou hadſt need to be ſhut in by God himſelf: A true Chriſtan is like Mount *Sion*, that cannot be moved, when he is founded upon this rock, *nec flatu nec fluctu movetur*, he need fear neither winde nor weather, if he fall, Chriſt himſelf muſt fall, and it is bet-

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ter fall with him, then ſtand without him: Chriſt lives in him, and while Chriſt that is the life of his ſoul lives, he cannot die; but if thy houſe be built upon the ſand, when the windes and waves come, and come they will, it will ſurely down, and great will be the fall thereof, becauſe irreſiſtable, and irreparable: O my God, are trying times coming? and muſt I be ſifted by ſatan? winnowed by the world, and fanned by Chriſt? who can ſtand in theſe trials, and bear up againſt theſe flouds, and waves without divine aſſiſtance? Lord, give me ſtrength from above, for vain is the help of man; make me ſolid grain that may abide the winde, true gold that may abide the fire, and build me upon that rock that is high, that no ſtorms nor tempeſts, may beat me down, nor all the flouds in the world may ever remove me.

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*Upon clean ſeed ſown, yet brings forth chaff.*

42. *Med.* WHen I beheld how the ſeed that laſt year I had ſo carefully winnowed, purged, fanned, and purified from all weeds, and ſeeds, chaff, and rubbiſh, which adhered to it, and ſown in my garden that which was clean, pure and good, yet when it came to maturity it was not

not only cumbred with weeds and other annoiances, which the ground naturally caſt up, but had as much ſtalk, chaff, and other rubbiſh as it had the year before, which grew up with it, and adhered to it, and was naturally produced by the ſeed, and it had as much need of weeding, threſhing, winnowing, and purging, as it had the year before, to make it fit for uſe, or market; this minded me, that thus it was with poor ſouls, ſince the fall, for as the earth caſteth out weeds of its own accord, and a fountain ſends forth water, ſo doth the heart bubble forth corruption of its own accord; a gracious man that hath taken a great deal of pains with his heart to weed out corruption, and to mortifie his ſin, and hath been threſht, and fanned, and purged and purified, and it hath been the work of many years to do it, and hath coſt him much labour, pains, and diligence, and many a prayer and tear, yet he cannot beget a godly childe, but chaff and corruption adheres to them alſo, nay inheres in them, and they have as much need of refining as ever the father had; for though a ſinful man beget a ſinful childe, yet cannot a gracious man beget a gracious childe, for he begets him as he is a man, and of the ſinful off-ſpring of fallen *Adam*, and not as he is gracious; and though God do more uſually make choiſe of his people out of ſuch families,

milies, the covenant being with them and their ſeed, and he hath reſpect to their prayers, and gives a bleſſing to their education and exhortations, yet this is not always ſo, neither are they born thus; for *they are the children of wrath as well as others*; and though ſin be hereditary, grace is not; Ah ſin! what woful work haſt thou made in the world, the moſt of men periſh eternally by thee, and thoſe that eſcape are ſaved, as by fire, with a very great deal of pains and difficulty: holy *David* begat a laſcivious *Amnon* and a rebellious *Abſolom*, good *Ely* begat bad ſons, and holy *Iſaac* a prophane *Eſau*; yea, faithfull *Abraham* a ſcoffing *Iſhmael*: for as a learned man cannot beget a learned childe, for learning is not a birth-priviledge but an acquired qualification, ſo grace is not born with, but freely given to them that God thinks fit to beſtow it upon: A rich mans childe comes into the world as naked, deſtitute, and miſerably impotent and helpleſs as any other; This as it may minde us of our miſerable condition by the fall, ſo alſo of our duty to our children, that as we are carefull of their bodies, ſo ſhould we be much more carefull of their ſouls, and as we are carefull that they get learning, ſo ſhould we be much more that they get grace: an eſtate is not ſo needfull as an intereſt in Chriſt; we ſhould endeavour by

by inſtruction, correction, and good education, to train them up in the fear of God, and when we can do no more, to go to him that is able to give it, to beg grace for them; for as we were inſtrumental in their ruine, ſo we ſhould endeavour their recovery. But too many train them up no otherwiſe then they do their horſes, teach them to drudge, and think they have done well, eſpecially if they can leave them an eſtate behinde them, which oftentimes is ſo badly gotten, that they entail alſo a curſe upon them, and their poſterity; and God doth in a viſible manner puniſh their children to the third and fourth generation. Oh my ſoul, how ſtands the caſe with thee? thou art a childe of wrath by nature, as well as others, is thy relation to thy God changed? of an enemy art thou an adopted ſon? tis well: thou hadſt droſs, is that conſumed, and the ſoul refined? thou hadſt chaff is that blown away? haſt thou the marks of adoption now upon thee, that formerly hadſt the marks of an enemy? doſt thou reſemble thy father? doſt bear his image? God hath no children but what have ſome reſemblance to him, he never adopts any but he changeth their nature, and diſpoſition, as well as their relation; he hath no unnatural children: hath he made good that promiſe to thee, 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. *I will be a father*

*ther to them, and they ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord almighty:* hath he performed the duty of a father, in thy new birth, in maintaining thee, and giving the heavenly allowance? in inſtructing and correcting thee? and haſt thou the nature, diſpoſition, and priviledge of children? haſt thou communion with him? doth he feed thee with bread from heaven? cloath thee with the robes of righteouſneſs, and adorn thee with the jewels of his grace? is there a through change wrought in thee, and a new nature put into thee? haſt thou given up thy heart as well as thy name to Chriſt? if it be ſo, it is well: if thou haſt this priviledge for thy ſelf, ſeek it for thy children alſo; as thou haſt dedicated them to God, do thy endeavour to make them Gods, and that the work of grace may be timely wrought in their ſouls; curb corruption while they are young, a green twig, will eaſily be bended, but when old and dry the work is difficult: many like the *ape* kill their young ones with embracing, and they come to break their parents heart, who thought a rod too heavy for them; withhold not correction nor inſtruction, and go to God for a bleſſing upon both; Oh my God, am I wilde by nature, and haſt thou planted me into the true olive? haſt thou taken me off my own ſtock, and planted

ted me into the true vine? Lord, what ſhall I render to thee for this? Lord, help me to give up my heart, as well as my name to thee, and live thanks as well as ſpeak thanks: haſt thou made me a ſon? Lord, give me a ſon-like diſpoſition; and let me honour my God, by a holy life and converſation: And O that my children might live before thee; Lord, purge out the droſs, blow away their chaff, make them thy ſons and thy daughters.

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*Upon the pleaſures of a garden.*

43. *Med.* BEing in a well-contrived, well-furniſhed, well-ordered garden, where there was what nature, or art could beſtow upon it, various well-coloured, well-ſented flowers, which chequered the knots, and delighted both the ſight and ſmell, with various ſorts of herbs, and vegetables, as well phyſicall as otherwiſe, together with curious walks, and ſhady bowers, and other curious contrivances, delightful delicacies and various curioſities, that it ſeemed to me an earthly paradice, a place of pelights and pleaſures, which when I had viewed, and for a while ſolaced my ſelf in it, I took much pleaſure in it, and could contentedly have ſpent my time there;

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my affections were much tickled with it, and grew warm upon it, and for a while I delighted my self in it, but at last I began to call my self to an accompt, and to check my self for it, with such considerations as these; oh my soul, what art thou doing, or whether art thou going? art thou in heaven, or upon the earth, that thou art taking up thy station? art thou like *Shimei* in seeking a servant? dost thou lose thy self? wilt thou by admiring the gift, neglect the giver, or court the maid before the mistress? and take up with a handful of muck, for a handful of angels? is this a suitable portion for thee, or rather a suitable match for the soul, that thou art espousing thy self to it, and letting out thy affections upon it? will this serve thy turn, or make thee happy? or will it endure to eternity? alas! it will not, when winter comes, where are then thy delights? nay, when night comes, it deprives thee of thy pleasure, yea, every shower of rain, puts thee on to seek another happiness, and a better shelter and security: what then will become of thee at death or judgment, if thou hast no better a refuge? what good can these do thee in heaven or in hell? these things are not lasting, thou seest the flowers ripe at noon, and withered by night, like *Jonahs* gourd, *grow up in a night, and wither in a night*, and have a worm breed in them, which

which will eat out their heart; they are like the *bee*, they have honey in the mouth, and a sting in the tail; and not only vanity, but vexation of spirit is writ upon them: will a handful of flowers revive a dying man, or comfort a languishing soul? when the earth and all the works therein are burnt up, where will be thy happiness then? why then wilt thou moil and toil, and cark and care for such vanities that never will make thee satisfaction? why *wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?* if thou wilt take pains, let it be in a more fruitful soil, where thou maist expect a better crop; *spend not thy money for that which is not bread, nor thy labour for that which satisfies not*; these cannot satisfy, and if they did, cannot last long, these are but swallow-comforts, they hide their heads in the winter, the grass will soon wither, the flowers will soon fade, and thy own life is no more certain, and what good will these do the soul? some poor vanishing delights they yield, for an hour or two, and then it is over, but there are more satisfying pleasures, more durable delights to be had, then these, why are they then neglected? these, like swallow-friends, forsake when winter comes, when there is most need, or like *Physitians* leave a man when he is dying, or like the devil with the witch, tempt a while, and then forsake her, when she is in

the moſt danger; If a ſmall ſpot of earth ſeem ſo delightful, what is heaven, and thoſe manſions of glory provided for glorified Saints? if the creature be ſo glorious, what is the Creator, who infuſed ſuch a beauty and vertue in it? if a flower be ſo ſweet, what is the *roſe of Sharon and the lilly of the valley*? theſe things delight us for a moment, but one day will make us weary of them, eſpecially if there be not the addition of meat, and drink, and ſleep, and lodging, of health, and ſtrength, and other neceſſaries; but in heaven is nothing wanting that is neceſſary, delightful or deſirable; no creature-comforts there are needful, but God is better a thouſand times then all the comforts the whole earth affords; oh my ſoul, labour after the ſubſtance, not the ſhadow; after Chriſt and a title to glory; there are reall pleaſures to be had, *rivers of pleaſure at his right hand for evermore*; ſcorn then to be put off with ſuch poor things, or to let out thy affections upon ſuch vanities, or to let them grovel upon the ground: wilt thou ſuffer thy eyes to be dazled with a few flowers when thou maiſt behold the ſun, the moon, and ſtars; thoſe glorious lamps and beauty-ſpots of heaven; theſe are greater beauties, thoſe beautify only the porch: how beautiful then is the palace, the throne, nay, the king himſelf? Theſe flowers thou

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now admireſt may for ought thou knoweſt be cropt, and made uſe of for thy funeral, for thy body is as fading, and thy life as uncertain as they are; a few days will ſhew make them uncapable of pleaſing thee, or thee uncapable of praiſing them: this uſe thou maiſt make of this pleaſing object, be as careful of thy ſoul, as the gardiner is of this plot of ground, let neither thorn nor thiſtle, briar nor weed of ſin, thrive there, ſupply what is wanting, root out what is ſuperfluous, order what is diſordered, and then it is a happy time thou madeſt this Obſervation: oh my God, what a poor pitiful fooliſh wretch am I, thus to doat upon vanities; Lord, wean my affections from the world, and keep them cloſe to thy ſelf.

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*Upon an adder lurking in the graſs.*

44. *Med.* WAlking in the garden, I had like to have trod upon an adder, lurking in the graſs, and ſo was in unexpected danger, where I leaſt dreaded it; the apprehenſions of it at preſent put me into amaze, which when it was ſomething abated, it made me conſider, what daily need we have of divine protection, and how dangerous it is to be from under the prote-

ſting hand of God: It made me alſo to conſider, that thus it is in all our earthly enjoyments, there is no ſecurity in any, much danger in all, *anguis in herba latet*, there is a little honey, and many ſtings, a little pleaſure and much pain: there is no age, no calling, no condition of life, free; riches are held by many to be the greateſt happineſs, and moſt men rather deſire gold then grace, and to be great rather then good, yet theſe are not without their ſnares, neither ſet men out of the reach of danger; they are called *deceitfull riches*, ſuch as choak the word, when it was ſown, *Mat.* 22. 13. and well they may be ſo called, for they promiſe that they never pay; and always deceive thoſe that truſt them; they promiſe content, ſatisfaction and happineſs, when oftentimes (like ſtrong drink in a feaver) they do but inrage the diſeaſe, *he that loveth ſilver, ſhall not be ſatisfied with ſilver, Eccles.* 5. 10. a man may as ſoon fill a cheſt with grace, an empty ſtomach with air, as a covetous heart with grace, *pauperis eſt numerare pecus* (ſaith the coveteous man) he had never enow cattle while they might be numbred: a ſhip may ſink under the burthen, that is not half full, and men may have riches enough to ſink them, when not half enough to ſatisfy them; *non plus ſatiatur, cor auro, quam corpus aura:*

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But this is not all their vanity neither, for as they are unſatisfying, ſo they are uncertain, *they take themſelves wings and fly away*, *Pro.* 23. 5. they are never true to thoſe that truſt them, they are oft as tranſitory as a head-long torrent; but this is not all, they are golden fetters to chain the ſouls faſter in the devils clutches, and faſter in his ſervice; and many times the devil, buys mens ſouls, yea, their very profeſſion out of their hands for money; pleaſures have honey in the mouth but a ſting in the tail; they oft periſh in the budding; *in the midſt of laughter, the heart is ſorrowfull, and the end of that mirth is heavineſs*: *favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain*, *Pro.* 31. 30. and thoſe that truſt to them ſhall be deceived; favour will fail, and beauty will wither, and how will they deceive mens expectation? ſome men marry (ſaith one) by the eye, and ſome by their fingers ends, *viz.* for money, *dos non Deus* makes ſuch matches: *Abſolom* and his ſiſter found there was danger, truſting to their beauty, and many more beſides them, to whom it hath proved a temptation: honour is the emptieſt of all bubbles, courted by many, attained by few, and there is but a little diſtance between the higheſt round of the ladder and the loweſt ſtep; let *Haman* and *Achitophel* prove the point: Beauty many times is like

a blazing ſtar, ominous to the beholders, and hurtfull to thoſe that enjoy it, and proves ofttimes the devils lime-twigs to catch his fowls: meat and drink are neceſſary, yet to many *their table becomes their ſnare*, and by a plentifull table they come to be guilty of gluttony and drunkenneſs; *wine is a mocker, and ſtrong drink is raging, and he that is overtaken with it, is not wiſe*; *I fed them to the full* (ſaith God) *and they were as fed horſes, every one neighed after his neighbours wife*; learning and great parts are lovely endowments, and many times it proves dangerous and deadly; the greateſt ſcholars oft prove the greateſt enemies to Chriſt, and the greateſt adverſaries to the power of godlineſs; In a word, thoſe that have moſt of the world, have frequently the leaſt of heaven: *Son* (ſaith *Abraham*) *remember that thou in thy life time receivedſt thy good things, and likewiſe* Lazarus *evil things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented, Luk.* 16. 25. Wealth many times ſwells men into a tympany, not eaſily cured, I know there are ſome that follow Chriſts counſell, *and make to themſelves friends of this Mammon of unrighteouſneſs*, but moſt do but encreaſe their account by them, and at the reckoning-day will prove bankrupts, and owe *ten thouſand talents* more then they are able to pay; earthly enjoyments uſually rock men in

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the cradle of ſecurity, and lull them aſleep that they never wake till hell fire flames about their ears ; thus the rich man *Luke.* 12. 16. and that alſo *Luk.* 16. 19. *&c.* when the moon is at full , it is furtheſt diſtance from the ſun, and neareſt to an ecclips, and the world many times interpoſeth it ſelf between the full ſoul and the ſun of righteouſneſs : relations and carnal friends oft-times prove ſnares, thus they were to *Job*, to *Spira*, and to many more ; the things that are in themſelves lawfull bleſſings, yet abuſed, prove our *licitis perimus omnes*, immoderately uſed prove a ſin and a ſnare : oh my ſoul thou walkeſt in the midſt of dangers, ſnares are laid for thee in every creature, in every corner, truſt not therefore to any, the moſt innocent will betray thee, if not heedfully obſerved, and wiſely enjoyed, the moſt harmleſs, nay , the moſt neceſſary enjoyments are not free from ſnares, a ſerpent may lie under thy feet , poyſon may be in thy cup or diſh, many temptations are in poverty, more in plenty, pray therefore with *Agur*, *not to have poverty, nor riches, but to be fed with food convenient*, *Pro.* 30. 8. as a ſhoe too big, or too little, ſuits not the foot, ſo an eſtate too big is troubleſome, and to little pinches ; a ſtaff may help the paſſenger in his journey , but a burden of ſtaves will be his hinderance : oh

my God, are there ſo many dangers that attend me, both in reference to my body, and my ſoul: oh what need have I of divine protection: Lord be thou my defender, keep me under the ſhadow of thy wings, O let not Satan, the world, or my own deceitful heart ever betray me, but let me be kept *by the mighty power of God unto ſalvation.*

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*Upon a Toad.*

45. *Med.* OBſerving as I walked in the garden, in an evening, a loathſom foul, and ugly toad, crawling in my way, haſting from me as from a deadly enemy, to hide her head in a hole, to ſave her life, and that from one that ſhe had never wronged; this ſight occaſioned me this Meditation; how nigh akin am I to this poor creature, this diſpicable, loathed, and abhorred wretch, there is but the ſheers between us, nothing but the makers will; ſhe is my ſiſter, and may claim the right of primogeniture, as coming into the world before me; we have the ſame original, the ſame father, and the ſame mother; we were made of the ſame matter, by the hand of the ſame workman, but ſhe hath the precedency in nature, and came of the elder brother; both of us were of the *ſame clay*, and faſhioned by the ſame potter;

potter ; *hewn out of the ſame rock, and digged out of the ſame hole of the pit* ; and had it pleaſed the workman, I might have been the toad, and this the man, no thanks to me that it was not ſo, and it had been no wrong to me if it had been ſo; I might have been crawling into that hole to ſave my life, from one that deſired my death, and fed upon ſuch loathſom meat, that ſhe feeds on, but my God hath beſtowed more upon me, and denied it to her, *even ſo Lord, becauſe it hath ſeemed good in thy eyes* ; oh my ſoul, what haſt thou done more for thy God, then this poor creature hath done ? doubtleſs *where more is given, more will be required* ; thou haſt received ten talents for one, nay an hundred for one, how haſt thou improved them ? and God expects from man much more ſervice then from any other creature in the world, being only fitted for communion with himſelf : But hath not this deſpicable wretch, which thou thinkeſt is not worthy to live, ſerved God in her place better then thy ſelf ? and anſwered the end of her creation better then man ? and never tranſgreſt her maſters will, nor her makers law, as thou haſt done a thouſand times ? ſhe deſires nothing more then life, and what is neceſſary to maintain it, and fears nothing more then death, and what tends to it, and doth no hurt, but it is imagined good to mankinde, unleſs hurt

or provoked, and if ſhe have a noxious quality, it is queſtionable, whether the ſin of man hath not procured it: God hath given thee the uſe of reaſon, and made thee capable of communion with himſelf, and enjoying him for ever, and laid upon her (far more innocent) this puniſhment, of being hated and abhorred of all, and her life is put into thy hands, and whoſoever killeth her, thinks he hath not offended, thou canſt walk free from fear, when every one that ſees her deſires her death, and plots her ruine, and deſtruction; what cauſe then have I to bleſs God, that I was made a man, and not a toad, and that I had the uſe of reaſon given to me, and not made a bruit, but if I be not regenerate and born again, if I have not the image of God renewed in me, which I loſt by the fall, if I anſwer not the end of my creation and redemption, if my ſin be not mortified, and the power of my corruptions abated, if grace be not implanted in my heart, by the ſpirit of God; if I have not an intereſt in Chriſt, and a title to glory, if the miſtical marriage be not made between Chriſt and my ſoul, and my affections ſet upon him; if any thing in the world lie nearer to my heart then he doth, and be beloved above him, the time will come, and it will not be long firſt, that I ſhall wiſh, would God I had been made the toad, and this toad

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the man, for then my misery would have ended with my life, when now it is like to begin at my death, and eternity of torments will be little enough to pay the debt which I owe; but her debts being nothing but death, will be soon discharged: oh my soul, if God do not distinguish thee from wicked men by grace, as well as from this toad by reason, thy misery will be far worse then hers, and thy condition more forlorn: Oh poor man whither art thou fallen? thou wast in the creation made the glory of this Universe, and all the creatures to be thy servants, yea, *the angels to be Ministring spirits for thy good*, and now if God assist not in a new creation, the meanest, and most despicable of the creatures is in a better condition then thou art; Oh sin, what woful work hast thou made among us, and of what a bewitched nature art thou, and how hast thou infatuated us, still to doat upon thee, and to think thee lovely? oh my God, how good hast thou been to me, and how evilly have I requited thee for thy good, and how foolishly have I behaved my self to my own soul? thou createdst me after thine own image, in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, and gavest me dominion over thy creatures; *thou madest me little lower then the angels, and crownedst me with honour and dignity*, *Psal.* 8. 4, 5, 6. such I was when I past our

of thy hand, but I have loſt this image, by the fall and this ſupremacy, and now this poor creature is in a better condition then I am by nature, and never tranſgreſs thy laws as I have done, but Lord, thou canſt renew thine image in me, and bring me to my primitive happineſs, Lord, do it, then ſhall I praiſe thee with unfained lips, that thou haſt made me a man.

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*Upon the courſing of a hare.*

46. *Med.* BEing occaſionally preſent at the courſing of a hare, and my affection being tickled with the ſport, to ſee what turnings, windings, ſhifts, and cunning evaſions ſhe had to delude her enemy, and make an eſcape, but all too little; for ſhe after came to be their prey, that ſought her life, and to ſuck her bloud: when I felt my affections thus to heat, and cloſe with the ſport, I began to check my ſelf for it, and to expoſtulate the caſe thus with mine own heart; vain man, what art thou doing? whither art thou going? art thou in heaven, or on the earth, that thy affections are ſo pleaſed? is it God or the creature that gives thee this content? alaſs, what poor fading periſhing joy is this? and canſt thou finde more delight in it,

it, then in the service of God, or in communion with Christ? Nay, but art thou sure, that these delights are lawfull, if not thou hast cause to bewail it, the thing may be disputable; was it not the sin of man that brought this enmity and antipathy between the creatures, and made them thirst after one anothers bloud? Reverend Mr *Bolton* tels us, this is the judgement of the best Divines, that it was a fruit of our rebellion against God: now, if this misery was laid upon them for our faults, it should be rather matter of our grief then sport, and taking pleasure in their bloud, is a vexing of their very vexation, and we discover those weeds and seeds of cruelty to be too rank and luxurious in the soul, and we degenerate in this below the beast of the field, who (as it is observed) take not content in hurting one another, but in case of hunger or anger, they satisfy their appetite and rage, sometimes, with bloud, but never their eye or their fancy. Is the fruits of our sin become the matter of sport? this consideration might work in us a contrary effect, and I think much better; but grant (for no body will deny it) that we have liberty given us to make use of this antipathy, for the destroying of hurtful creatures, and the enjoying of those that are usefull, (as these now under consideration)

ſideration) which no doubt are given to us for food as well as others, and grant that they cannot be ſo well taken any other way, and their fleſh to be beſt when it is thus hunted and chaſed, yet it ſtill remains diſputable whether their death were ever appointed by God to be a matter of ſport, or a lawfull recreation to us; to kill them is no doubt lawfull, but to ſport our ſelves in their death ſeems cruel and bloudy; to delight more in ſeeing the ſhifts, the poor creature hath to ſave her life, (an inſtinct given her by nature, and to ſee her in the mouths of her bloud-thirſty enemies, rending and tearing her in peeces, without mercy,) then they do in the fleſh it ſelf, which ſhould be (I think) the cheifeſt end in this action, ſeems cruel and bloudy recreation: ſuppoſe thou heardeſt ſuch a poor creature giving up the ghoſt to ſpeak after this manner (for it is no abſurdity to fain ſuch a ſpeech): oh man, what have I done to thee? or what evil is found in me, that like a cruel enemy thou ſporteſt thy ſelf at my death? I have lived upon my fathers allowance, and never tranſgreſt my maſters will, nor makers laws, as thou haſt done; If thou take away my life, what needſt thou make a ſport at my death? *If a ſparrow fall not to the ground without Gods providence, ſurely he takes notice of my death,*

*and*

*and the manner of it*; and I am part of the goods thy maſter commends to thee as a ſteward, and for which thou muſt give an account; I am thy fellow-creature, made of the ſame matter, by the ſame hand; it was not all the men on earth could have created me, or given me life, my life was given me by God, and now it is taken away in ſport to pleaſe man; take heed (vain man) that thus doſt ſatiate thy ſelf with my bloud, leſt at laſt thy condition be worſe then mine, and thy account heavier; my debt is now paid by my death, and my own ſufferings, but thine will never be diſcharged by thy ſelf to eternity: this pleaſure thou haſt now taken will be dearly bought, and this fleſh of mine muſt be ſatisfied for hereafter, if Chriſt be not thy ſurety: nay, O man, thou knoweſt not but there are ſome enemies, if God reſtrained them not, that do as earneſtly thirſt after thy bloud as thou haſt done after mine, and would be glad to waſh their hands in it, however the devil is a more cruel bloud thirſty enemy to thy ſoul, then theſe dogs are to my body, *and goes about day and night like a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he may devour*, and take heed leſt thoſe dogs which have now drunk my bloud, and are too often fed with the poors portion, and deſerve death as well as I, being every way as noxious;

ious, do not riſe up againſt thee another day, *&c.* Oh my ſoul, ſpend no more time in recreation then thou canſt afford, and that is but a little, till thy main work be done, and then ſpend no more in recreation then thy ſtate will afford, and that will not be much; take heed that the poors part be not devoured by unprofitable dogs, and beſure the recreation thou uſeth be lawfull, what is cruel and bloudy may be ſuſpected; let it be when true need is, and to fit thee for thy general or particular calling: oh my God, give me wiſdome that I may never delight in any thing that offends thee; let me not make a mock of ſin leſt thou call me fool for my labour, *and laugh at my deſtruction, and mock when my fear comes*; preſerve me from my bloud thirſty enemies, eſpecialy from ſatan that hunts after my ſoul.

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*Upon the labour and pains men take about worldly things.*

47. *Med.* WHen I had wearied, and almoſt ſpent my ſelf in digging, delving, and moiling in the garden, and had unfitted my ſelf for better, and more neceſſary employments, I began at laſt to check my ſelf for it, and diſcourſe with my ſelf

ſelf after this manner ; vain man, what have I been doing ? or how have I ſpent my time, and my ſtrength ? is it for heaven, or for the earth, for my ſoul, or for my body ? for this life or that to come ? is there ſo much pains needful for a little ſpot of earth, which will bring in little, if any advantage ? what pains then is neceſſary for heaven ? have I been ſo prodigal of my time and pains, and ſweat, and labour, for this poor empty nothing, and yet negligent in the main concern ? when did I take ſo much pains for heaven and happineſs, for Chriſt and glory, as I have done for theſe trifles ? when did I ſweat thus in Gods ſervice, and ſpend my ſelf thus in doing his work ? am I working for a better maſter ? or is this a more delightful employment, or am I like to receive, or can I expect better wages then he gives, that I work harder, and ſweat more then I would do in his work, and follow my buſineſs with more diligence, care and induſtry ? if the whole world be really worth ſo much labour, pains, and induſtry, as I have beſtowed upon this little angle, this worthleſs plot of ground, what pains doth heaven deſerve ? if to the obtaining the whole world deſerves one days hard work, ſure heaven deſerves all the reſt ; good things are not had at eaſy rates, the more excellent the more difficult : it is ſo in

earthly enjoyments, riches cannot be had without ſweat and pain, without cark and care; nor learning without labour, and ſtudy; and will heaven be had with a wet finger? cannot I provide for a few days without all this adoe, and can I provide for eternity with leſs labour? will an intereſt in Chriſt, and a title to glory be had ſo eaſily? no, no, doubtleſs a ſlow pace will fall ſhort of heaven, and the ſluggard is never like to come there; there muſt be ſtriving, running, contending, fighting, or we ſhall not obtain; *the kingdome of heavsn ſuffers violence, and the violent take it by force*; thoſe only that are carried out with ſtrength of affection, after Chriſt, ſhall enjoy him; thoſe are like to have the pearl, that will have it at the hardeſt rates; though they ſell all to purchaſe it; heaven is had by the violent, though the earth be inherited by the meek, *Mat.* 5. 6. thoſe that content themſelves with the leaſt mercies here, as not deſerving any, cannot content themſelves with the greateſt portion the world can make up for them, becauſe they know there is a better portion laid up for them by their father: there is nothing but eternity that can make us abſolutely happy, or perfectly miſerable; eternity added to happineſs or miſery, makes it compleat, and can I attain the one, or avoid the other ſo eaſily? toyſom days, and weariſom nights

nights may make us willing of a change, but what good will a change do if it be for the worse, and not the better? or how can we expect better, and not make preparation for it? can we expect an harvest that have sown no seed; or wages that have done no work? can we expect the prize that never run the race, or the victory that never entred into the field to fight? if we bury our selves and talents in the earth, can we expect they will be there improved? nay, may we not expect a reckoning day, when they will be taken from us, and given to those that are diligent, and will improve them; a judging time is coming when our reward will be according to our diligence, and our wages according to our work; if we sow vanity, we shall reap folly, *if we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption, if we sow to the spirit we shall of the spirit reap life everlasting*; if we trade only in earthly commodities, we cannot expect rationally any other gain, but what they afford, which will never recompence the pains and care, and loss we sustain upon that account; but if we serve a better Master, we may expect better wages: oh my soul, how justly here maist thou be reproved for thy diligence in trifles, and neglect of the substance? thou hast not only let the world run away with thy time, thy hands and thy head, but with thy heart also:

ſo: uſe the world thou maiſt, but abuſe it thou muſt not, but ſo thou doſt when thy affections cloſe with it, and thou committeſt ſpiritual adultery with it, and lodgeſt it in the room where Chriſt ſhould lodge; in thy earthly buſineſs thy heart ſhould be in heaven, and thine eye upon Chriſt; if thou be diligent, it ſhould be becauſe he commands it, and if thou do all in obedience to his command, then doſt thou engage him to be thy pay-maſter, and maiſt expect a reward from him, even for doing thy own work: learn to make ſome ſpiritual uſe of all thy earthly enjoyments, then by divine meditation thou maiſt enjoy heaven upon earth, yea, extract heaven out of the earth, and God out of the creature; that muſt needs be a rich ſoul that can with the *bee* extract honey out of every weed and flower: oh my God, I muſt confeſs, I have been groſsly faulty, not only for ſpending my time and ſtrength upon vanities, but letting out my affections on them alſo: Lord ſuffer me no longer to ramble from thee, gather in my ſcattered affections to thy ſelf, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canſt make me clean, let me ſee more excellency in thee then the world can ſhew, this will engage my heart to thee for ever.

*Upon the dilligence of the ſpider.*

48. *Med.* OBſerving the induſtry, diligence, and painful labour of the ſpider, a contemptible creature, how buſy ſhe was in weaving her nets, how induſtriouſly ſhe plys her work, and though oftentimes ſhe meet with diſappointments, had her work ſpoiled, and her ſelf indangered, yet never a whit diſcouraged, or diſheartned, ſhe begins again; this is one of theſe *four things that Solomon had obſerved in the earth, that were little but wiſe,* &c. *the ſpider that taketh hold with her hands, and is in Kings palaces, Pro.* 30. 24. *&c.* ſhe doth her work painfully, and curiouſly ſpins (ſaith one) a finer thred then a woman can do, builds a finer houſe then a man can do, in manner and form like an Emperours tent; ſhe draws her web out of her own bowels: When I had a while pleaſed my ſelf with the curioſity of the work, and commended the diligence of the workman, I began to conſider what her end might be of all this pains, or what benefit did accrue to her by this her diligence? I could gueſs at no other, or at leaſt no higher an end, then to make a net to catch flys, which I ſaw became her priſoners, when otherwiſe ſhe could not take them, and

when they were in her power, ſhe proved their mortal enemy, few eſcaping her with life: I perceived that when the *Bee* laboureth to preſerve life, her work was to deſtroy; I thought when I had conſidered it, her work did much reſemble the devils, for he like the ſpider is ever buſy and never well employed; *he goes about like a roaring lyon, ſeeking whom he may devour,* 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. he envies man the happineſs that he loſt, he is that venimous ſpider that poyſons us, his very breath is infectious; the nets and ſnares are his temptations, and poor ſouls are the flys he hunts for, which fall faſter into his nets, then flys do into the ſpiders webs, and when they are at his mercy, nothing will ſerve, but their death and utter deſtruction; he like a cunning Fiſher, baits his hooks, and like a fowler ſpreds his nets to catch unwary ſouls, and ſpares none; high nor low, rich nor poor, young nor old, fair nor foul, but he hath one bait or other ſuited to their condition; he attemps all, Chriſt himſelf not excepted, for whom he prepared one of his choiſeſt, ſeldom-failing baits; *all this will I give thee*, but all in vain, his wilde-fire fell upon wet tinder; although a thouſand times ten thouſand have been taken with it, yet like a great fly he broke through, and ſpoil'd the web, and by the ſtrength of the Cap-

tain,

tain, Chriſtian ſouldiers alſo break his nets, repell his temptations, and become more then conquerors; he yet infects a great part of the world with the poyſon of this temptation; and it is a rare man that eſcapes; ſometimes, yea, too frequently he baits his hooks with a beautifull woman, and is too ſucceſsful; thus he fiſht for a ſtrong *Sampſon* with a beautiful *Dalilah*; for a holy *David*, with a *Bathſhebah*; and wiſe *Solomon* was oft deceived by this bate, and ſwallowed this hook; ſometimes he catcheth men with a golden hook; thus he did *Achan*, *Judas*, *Ananias* and *Saphira*, with *Demas*, and many others: ſometimes he baits with honours, and then ambitious *Herod* will ſoon bite, as alſo *Haman*, *Achitophel*, and many more; ſometimes with pleaſures, and then the youth are in danger: A poor withering *gourd* is a temptation to *Jonah*, and makes him quarrel with God himſelf; friends and relations often prove ſore temptations, and dangerous ſnares to a man; a beloved husband, a dear wife, a cockered childe, a near and dear relation, oftimes are made uſe of to undo thoſe to whom the greateſt love is pretended; *Jobs* wife though ſhe could not prevail to ruine him, yet ſhe proved a heavy burthen to him; but *Spira's* relations undid him, in making him to deny Chriſt:

*Peter* that great Apoſtle was an offence to Chriſt himſelf, in adviſing him to ſpare himſelf and not to ſuffer, no doubt by the inſtigation of ſatan, but Chriſt anſwers him with indignation; *get thee behinde me, ſatan, thou art an offence to me, for thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God, but thoſe that be of men*, *Mat.* 16. 23. he eaſily ſaw the devil in a beloved friend, and many times ſatan ſpeaks to us by them; many times a profeſſed Chriſtian, yea, one good man is a ſnare to another, leading them into errours or factions; but of all the baits the devil uſes, riches, honours, and pleaſures are the ſureſt, and ſeldomeſt fail him; by this he often buys mens ſouls, and hath their profeſſion out of their hands into the bargain; meat and drink are neceſſaries, yet *many mens tables becomes their ſnare*: Cloathes are needful, but this alſo proves a temptation to pride; learning and parts alſo, which are great ornaments to the minde, become dangerous ſnares; yea, what can be named, but may be abuſed; and what enjoyment can we have, but the devil will fly-blow it, grace it ſelf is not free, nay, humility ſometimes proves an excitement to pride: O the ſubtilty of ſatan, that can thus cheat the ſoul and fly-blow all our duties: and oh the mercy of a merciful Saviour, that hath broke the nets of this cunning hunter,

ter, or otherwiſe none could ever have eſcaped out of his hands; oh my ſoul, beware of thoſe ſnares which are ſpread for thy feet in every place, in every company, in every enjoyment, and in every duty; walk as circumſpectly as thou wouldſt do amidſt ſnakes, and ſerpents, or enemies that ſought thy life; ſleep not in the cradle of ſecurity, liſten not to the Syren-ſongs of the inchanting world, taſte not, touch not, gaze not upon any forbidden fruit; the devil will deceive thee by it, as he did *Eve*: though it ſeem ſweet in the mouth it will be gravel in the ſtomack: be moderate in the uſe of lawfull things, or they will prove unlawful: drink not poyſon in a golden cup, ſet not thy affections upon any earthly enjoyment, they will prove like *Dalilahs*; to betray thee into thy enemies hands: oh my God, I walk among ſnares, and am apt to be taken in them, be thou my guide, and direct my ſteps, preſerve me from the ſnare of the fouler, he is too cunning for me, but thou knoweſt how to deliver me, and to preſerve my ſoul from ſinning, and my feet from falling.

*Upon ſmall flys caught in a ſpiders web.*

49. *Med.* WHen I had veiwed the ſpiders web, and ſeriouſly conſidered the end it was made for, which (as I ſaid) ſeemed to me to be principally, if not only to catch flys, and to captivate thoſe little creatures, which otherwiſe were too quick for her; I then obſerved the event, and whether this little fowler could this way be recompenſed for all the pains ſhe had taken: I ſaw upon diligent obſervation, how ſmall flys were taken, and made a prey to their poyſonous enemy, who paid their ranſome with their lives, yet whether they were the food ſhe fed upon, or whether it were an innate antipathy in her to them, that thus ſhe ſought their deſtruction, I was not well able to diſcern; but withall I obſerved, that the great flys brake through the net, and ſometimes bare away both the weaver, and the web, as *Sampſon* did the gates and poſts of *Gaza*, and ſo the workman and the work were like to periſh together; this minded me of the ſaying of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 9. 15, 16. *the wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hands, the heathen are ſunk down into the pit that they made, in the net that they hid is their own foot taken*; I conſidered that many times God by his providence doth thus diſpoſe of the

the cruel enemies of his Church, and those that thirst after the blood of his Saints, *they have had blood, even their own blood to drink*, *Rev.* 16.6. so righteous is God in his judgments, and so true in his word; thus it was with *Pharaoh*, that sought the destruction of *Israel*, he and his army were overthrown in the Red-sea: *Adonibezek* that had caused *threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, to gather meat under his table*, was requited in like manner, by the men of *Judah*, *Judg.* 6,7. thus it was with *Haman*, he procured a decree to cut off all the *Jews*, and made a gallows fifty cubits high to hang *Mordecai* upon, but he himself was hanged upon it, and his own friends and relations were destroyed. Thus it was with *Daniels* persecutors, he was delivered out of the Lions den, and they were cast in; so the flames lickt up the men that threw the three Worthies into the fiery furnace, but had no power upon them: *Phaleris* perisht in his brazen Bull, the work of his own hands, invented to torment others; thus *Tomyris* dealt by *Cyrus*, and the *Parthians* by *Crassus*, and the *Romans* by those Jews that cryed out, *his blood be upon us, and upon our children*; and so God by his providence dealed with our gun-powder conspirators, and *so let thine implacable enemies perish, oh God*: this Observation also brought to my

minde

minde what I had ſomewhere read, and often heard, by way of complaint, of our Engliſh laws, *viz.* that they were like unto ſpiders webs, which hold the little flys, but the great ones break through, or like fiſhers nets rather, where the little fiſhes creep through, and the great ones break through; and I thought the compariſon not unfit: the laws themſelves I know would hold the greateſt malefactor, were not thoſe that ſhould execute them partiall, ofttimes fear or favour, makes them open the net, and let go their prey; how oft may we ſee partiality ſit as judge in ſome courts of Judicature; this is my friend, that is my kinsman, *deal gently with the young man for my ſake*: how oft have I ſeen a poor man ſtockt for ſwearing and drunkenneſs, and well they deſerved it, but his worſhip, or his honour, guilty of the ſame crimes, brake through the net, and eſcaped ſcot free, and was neither puniſhed in perſon nor purſe, yea, though they offended in the Magiſtrates preſence: but whether worſhipful titles will bear them out alſo before the judgment-ſeat of God, is worthy enquiry: there is no ſuch exceptions in Gods law, let him ſuffer except he be a Gentleman, nay, it is an aggravation to the fault of ſuch a one, who may well be preſumed to have better knowledge, and better breeding then others, or otherwiſe I know

not

not what gentility ſignifies; and he that knows his Maſters will and doth it not, ſhould be beaten with many ſtripes; I have read of a Gentleman being condemned to death, for a flagitious crime, and pleading for a mittigation of his puniſhment becauſe he was a Gentleman, the Judge yielded him but this favour, that he ſhould be hanged upon a higher gallows then the other were; and I fear the Eccleſiaſtical Courts are not much better, perhaps much worſe, poor ones are a prey not worth keeping, great ones are too big to be held, the middle ſort of fiſh beſt ſuits the net, and pleaſeth the palat; oh my ſoul, think not to eſcape at the judgment ſeat of God, by any external priviledge, *the ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall dye*, whether high or low, rich or poor; thou haſt a righteous Judge to be tryed by, that will not be corrupted by gold nor gain, who will hear over again all the cauſes tryed in our Courts of Judicatory, and parhaps paſs another ſentence; if thy cauſe be good, he will not condemn thee; oh my God, abſolve me in thy Court, and no matter if man condemn me, but if thou condemn me, there is none can acquit me.

50. *Med.* WHen I conſidered further the great diligence, and the unwearied pains of the ſpider, yea, the fineneſs of the thread, and the curioſity of the work, and how ſhe drew it out of her own bowels, and yet notwithſtanding how uſeleſs and unprofitable it was, if a man ſhould make a garment of it, it would neither wear well, nor keep warm or dry, neither can it ſhelter from winde or ſtorm; if he make armour of it, it cannot defend him; if we lean upon it, it cannot ſupport us; if we fall upon it, it cannot bear us up, neither can it ſtand before the beſome, but it is ſoon rent and ſpoiled, and ofttimes the work and the workman, the weaver and the web, are caſt both together into the fire; I thought it reſembled the world, and the things of the world; for of this it is the devil makes his net to catch ſouls, which are the flys he hunts after, which in it ſelf conſidered is vain and tranſitory, too poor a refuge to truſt to, either for temporal deliverance, or eternal happineſs; yet many like the ſpider ſpend themſelves to weave their web, and even draw it out of their own bowels, yea, their very hearts goes along with it, and if they meet with a proſperous ſucceſs, they like

like the rich man, *Luk.* 12. 16. &c. ſing a *requiem* to their ſouls, and promiſe themſelves a great deal of happineſs; when alas, Gods beſome of deſtruction ſudenly comes, and ſweeps away both the work and the workman in a moment, and caſts both into the fire, yet many ſpider-like put their truſt in theſe webs of their own making, and think they may eat, drink, and be merry, *&c.* right Epicures, that make their gut their God, and eat that on earth they muſt digeſt in hell: their glaſs is run, when they think it is but new turned; then ſhall they finde, though too late, that their money will do nothing, and death will not be hired, *but righteouſneſs alone will deliver from death.* *Solomon* tells us *Pro.* 18. 11. *the rich mans wealth is his ſtrong-hold, and high walls in his own conceit*, but wealth is never true to thoſe that truſt it, and cannot help in the evil day, *Zeph.* 1. 18. but if ſin lie at the foundation, though the walls be made never ſo high, they will tumble down, *Jer.* 17. 5. *curſed is man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the living God*; and truly, of ſuch refuges we may ſay as *Job* of the ſpiders web, *Job* 8. 13, 14, 15. *if a man lean upon his houſe, it ſhall not ſtand, though he hold it faſt it ſhall not endure*: moſt men like to a drowning man, lay hold upon ſomething to ſtay them, and to bear

up

up their heads above water, but if it be not upon the *Lord Jehovah*, it will do them no good, but prove like to *Egiptian reeds*, not only break, but run into their hands; ſhould we truſt in Princes, or Parliaments, in armies, or Gariſons, in men or money, in food or phyſick, in friends or relations, or in any other earthly enjoyment, we ſhall finde diſappointments, for theſe are not God, but webs of our own weaving, nets of our own making, which may help to ſink us, but never to ſave us: yet many men (as God complains) *Eſay.* 59. 5, 6. *they hatch cockatrice eggs, and weave ſpiders webs, but their web ſhall not become a garment, neither ſhall they cover themſelves with their work,* it is too thin to ſhelter them from a ſhower of divine juſtice, and too ſhort to cover their nakedneſs, *Pſal.* 33. 16, 17. *there is no king delivered by the multitude of an hoſt, a mighty man is not delivered by much ſtrength, a horſe is a vain thing for ſafety, neither ſhall he deliver any by his great ſtrength:* what then is the reſult of all, but this, *Jer.* 3. 23. *truly in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains, truly in the Lord our God is the ſalvation of Iſrael, Pſal.* 121. 2. *my help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth*: and as for temporals, ſo for ſpirituals: he that truſts for ſalvation from any thing but God, will ere long finde his miſtake,

and

and yet how many build their hopes upon a ſandy foundation, and truſt to a broken ſtaff, ſome to Church-priviledges, becauſe they are baptized, and go to Church, they think they muſt needs go to heaven, and that God wrongs them if he do not ſave them: they are like the *Jews* that though they *did ſteal, murther, and commit adultery, and ſwear falſly, and burn incenſe to* Baal, *and ſerved other Gods*, yet they cryed out *the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, Jer.* 7. 4, 6, 7. when they forgot the Lord of the temple, and diſobeyed him, yet they thought themſelves ſecure; but what was *Simon Magus* the better for his baptismal water, when he was ſtill *in the gall of bitterneſs, and bonds of iniquity?* Is the making of the covenant worth any thing, if it be not kept? it doth but encreaſe the guilt, and add to their damnation: ſome truſt for ſalvation to a good nature, a good diſpoſition, a good meaning, meer civility, common honeſty, and think it is ſufficient, I am neither whore, nor thief (ſaith one) and what then, muſt thou needs be ſaved? do all go to heaven that avoid theſe ſins? this is good news for many heathens; others truſt to humane learning, external gifts and parts: but the greateſt enemies that ever Chriſt had in the world, were men of great learning, and profound natural parts, the *Philoſophers* of old,

*Scribes and Phariſees*, yea, the Jeſuits at this day, others truſt to a bare profeſſion of religion, with the fooliſh virgins, but all this is but to a ſpiders web; oh my ſoul, reſt not upon theſe rotten props, or deceitful webs, for temporal ſafety or eternal ſalvation, for they will deceive thee; they are not the Lord *Jehovah* who is thy only refuge: lay thy foundation upon *that rock, that is higher then thee*, ſo neither winde nor weather, ſtorms nor tempeſts can moleſt thee: all other foundations are ſandy, and will down, they are Egiptian reeds, and will break in thy hand if thou lean upon them: truſt Gods power and providence, and his other attributes, for thy temporal preſervation, and roul thy ſelf upon the merits and righteouſneſs of Chriſt for thy eternal welfare, then wilt thou be happy here, and hereafter: oh my God, pardon my ſin and folly in expecting ſalvation *from the hills, and from the mountains*, in truſting to this and that arm of fleſh for temporal ſalvation, and leaning upon this and that ſpiders web for eternal ſalvation: Lord aſſiſt me for the time to come, to commit both ſoul and body to thy ſelf, who only canſt provide for me.

*Upon the painful and laborious Bee.*

51. *Med.* WHen I obſerved the buſy and labourious *bee*, how painful and diligent ſhe was in her employment, and how induſtriouſly ſhe buſied her ſelf, and how laboriouſly ſhe toiled, and moiled from morning to night in gathering both honey, and wax, which when ſhe had gotten, ſhe was as induſtrious in the diſpoſal of it; I obſerved how curious, how carefull, how exquiſite ſhe was in furniſhing her little cell, with the proviſion ſhe had got by her hard labour in building her combs; placing her honey, diſpoſing her young ones, and feeding them; and was ſo exact in all her labours, that the art or wit of man cannot reach her, nor erect ſo exact a fabrick out of ſuch materials, ſo uniform that nothing redundant, nothing deficient doth appear, and in all her little boxes ſo exact a ſymetry doth appear, as is admirable to behold, and beyond my skill to declare; ſhe is ſo painful and diligent, that from morning till night whenſoever ſeaſonable weather doth permit, ſhe is never idle; but either within door or without, is buſily employed, yea, the very firſt day ſhe is placed in her new habitation ſhe rids and cleanſeth it, decks

and adorns it, and makes it fit to begin her work, and from that day they all join heart and hand, (as we ſay) in the work, and jointly and ſeverally, all ſtudy and endeavour the common good; ſome order and government alſo there ſeems to be among thoſe poor inſects, not only in their labour, where no one is to live idlely, but alſo in reſiſting the common enemy; as we may ſee, how unanimouſly they ſet againſt the idle waſp, and at the time of the year againſt the ſluggiſh drone: I obſerved alſo in ſwarming times, how unanimouſly they agreed, and followed their leaders, where they fled they followed; and where they knit or lodged, there they aboad alſo; and that no quarrelling nor jarring ariſe among them; yea, when one was wronged, the other ſought revenge: I obſerved alſo in their work, how they gathered honey both from flowers and weeds, and (as I thought) made little difference, but extracted the quinteſcence of them for their own uſe, and that without any wrong to the owner, or dammage (ſo far as I could perceive) to the hearb or flower; theſe and ſome ſuch like conſiderations and obſervations, made me to think, it did much reſemble a well ordered common-wealth, or a well-regulated City, Corporation, or Community of perſons, or a family wherein all the

the members ſtudy the common good, rather then their own private intereſt, and lay out themſelves one for the good of another, and be all touched with the ſence of others infirmitys, and when one ſuffers all ſuffer; but alaſs, where are ſuch a people to be found, that bear ſuch a ſpirit for the publike good? *for all ſeek their own, Phil.* 2. 21. yea, Chriſtians themſelves that are united each to other in a ſtricter band then any other community whatſoever, are much wanting here, and might learn hence a leſſon of brotherly love and unity, they *ſhould be like affectioned one to another, and mourn with thoſe that mourn, and rejoyce with thoſe that rejoyce, Rom.* 12. 15. they ſhould be like lute-ſtrings when one is touched all the reſt ſound; like to ingenious children when one is beaten, the reſt all cry: the Apoſtle adviſeth, 1 *Cor.* 10, 24. *let no man ſeek his own, but every man anothers wealth, Phil.* 2. 4. *look not every one on his own things, but every man alſo on the things of others*: the very heathens could ſay, *we were not born for our ſelves but for others good*: but alaſs, this ſhews man as man is degenerate, even below the beaſt, yea, inſenſible creatures, the ſun, moon, ſtars, earth, beaſts, birds, fiſhes, who ſeem to be created for others uſe, and not their own good: *Paul* himſelf could finde no man like *Timo-*

*thy*, to take care for the ſtate of the Church, *for all* (ſaith he) *ſeek their own things, and not the things of Chriſt*, *Tit.* 2. 19. 20, 21. Theſe poor inſects alſo reſemble a diligent Chriſtian, that improves every thing for his Maſters glory, and the inriching of his own ſoul, and gathers honey from flowers and weeds, and here the ſlothful Chriſtian may be ſent to ſchool to the *Bee*, as *Solomon* ſends him to the *ant*, to learn diligence, for both theſe provide in ſummer for winter, and there are too many ſuch duſt-heaps in the world, ſuch ſluggards that are degenerated below the beaſts themſelves: There is great reaſon why men ſhould be more diligent then theſe, their dilligence is for the ſoul, the others for the body, they are in greater danger if idle; the *Bee* works for honey, the other for heaven; if the one want, death ends her miſery; if the other want, death begins his torment: theſe poor creatures have nothing to excite them but a natural inſtinct, but man hath the uſe of reaſon, the directions of the Scripture, and the aſſiſtance of the ſpirit, Miniſtry, conſcience, *&c.* to animate him: theſe have indeed flowers and herbs, trees and weeds, *&c.* to gather honey from, man hath a larger field to wander over, even the whole creation will ſupply him: there is not a ſtock, or ſtone,

or dead tree, or withering branch, or falling leaf or decaying flower, but will yield him honey, if he have the heavenly art of extracting it; they are feeble creatures: man is indewed with more ſtrength; we have a better prize before us, and have better help: we can work by day, or by night, in winter and ſummer, in froſt and ſnow, when they are hindred, and yet to our ſhame be it ſpoken, they are more diligent, and we more negligent: oh my ſoul, how may theſe poor inſects riſe up in judgment againſt thee, and condemn thee: thou haſt paſt the ſpring, the flower of thy age, and done little, winter is drawing on apace, what proviſion haſt thou made? the night approcheth, when no man can work; what honey haſt thou gotten? thou haſt had as ſeaſonable a ſummer as moſt in the world have had, and a long harveſt, and yet art thou unfurniſhed: what will be the iſſue of it? will the ſeaſon of grace always laſt? the bridegroom is coming, where is thy oyl? the marriage feaſt is near, where is thy wedding garment? oh my God, pardon my former neglects, and miſpence of precious time: Lord, keep me cloſe to my work, my little time that yet remains, and ſucceed me in it, that I may gather honey againſt the winter comes, and may not be unprovided at death.

*Upon the taſte of honey.*

52. *Med.* WHen I had a little conſidered the workman, and the work, I deſired to taſte of the fruits of her labours, but when I had taſted of the honey, and found the ſweetneſs of it, and caſt mine eyes upon the little workman, a poor ſmall inſect, a contemptible fly, that yet may challenge all the artiſts in the world by their Chymiſtry to extract ſuch excellent food out of ſtinking weeds, ſinks, dunghills, and other filthy places as ſhe doth, and that without the help of fire, or any other inſtrument then what God hath indewed her with: and when it is extracted, to place and diſpoſe of it in ſuch an excellent order and comely manner as ſhe doth; for ſhe furniſheth her houſe ſo exquiſitly, ſo uniformly as ſhe doth, that one little hole or cell cannot be found in the whole fabrick in a diſorderly form, and all the materials being taken from ſuch varieties of flowers, herbs, and weeds, the quinteſcence being extracted, is ſo orderly diſpoſed, the wax to build the houſe, and the honey to furniſh it, that it is wonderful to behold, and yet the herbs and flowers thus robbed, to our knowledge receive no detriment, nor their owners no dammage, for when it is gone it cannot be miſt.

miſt. When I conſidered alſo, the vertues and the operations both of the honey, and wax, the work of theſe poor creatures, how uſeful and beneficiall it was, not only for food, but for phyſick, and ſurgery, and for many other uſes, it made me cry out, the finger of God, the finger of God, that hath inſtructed ſuch a poor fly in ſuch an excellent art as this is, and made them ſo painful, ſo diligent, for the good of man, to help them to what they could not otherwiſe have, nor well be without; but if God be the ſchoolmaſter, no matter who be the ſchollars, all the men on earth cannot do the like, much leſs teach another fly this art, nay, we finde God himſelf ſeems to glory in this creature, how ſmall ſoever, as well as in the great *Leviathan*, and *Unicorn*, and *Behemoth*, *Job.* 41. 1. *&c. and* 40. 15. *and* 35. 9. When he commends *Canaan*, he frequently calls it, *a land flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands*, *Exod.* 3. 8, 17. *and* 33. 3. *Lev.* 20. 24. and many other places. In other Scriptures alſo we may ſee it commended, *Pro.* 24. 13. *my ſon, eat honey, becauſe it is good, and the honey-comb which is ſweet to thy taſte:* thus Chriſt accepting the duties, and delighting in the graces of his people, tells us, *Cant.* 5. 1. *He hath eaten his honey-comb with his honey, and hath drunk his wine with his milk*, and calls upon

his

his friends to drink abundantly alſo; I conſidered alſo, how good God was to us (as well as unto *Canaan*) in *England*, that have ſuch ſtore of theſe bleſſings as well as them, and wondred that our provoking ſins had not forced him to deal by us, as he hath dealt by them, and to make our land ſpew us out alſo, yea, to lay a curſe upon the land alſo, as he did upon theirs, for it is conceived that *Judea* is at this day far more barren, and ſterile, then heretofore it was; ſo true is that of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Pſal.* 107. 33. 34. *He turneth rivers into a wilderneſs, and the water-ſprings into dry ground, a fruitful land into barrenneſs, for the wickedneſs of them that dwell therein.* I conſidered alſo, if there be ſo much ſweetneſs in the creature what is in the Creator? this being but a ſhadow and reſemblance of his infinite perfections, all the excellency that is in the creature being but a drop to this ocean, a ray to this ſun, and a ſpark to this fire; the Word of God which is a manifeſtation of his will, is by *David* ſaid to be *ſweeter then honey and the honey comb, better then thouſands of gold and ſilver*, *Pſal.* 19. 10. *and* 119. 72. 103. *Job.* 23. 12. *I have not gone back from the commandemonts of his lips, I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary food*: oh, how ſweet then is God himſelf to an hungring ſoul? what are the longings, pantings,

tings, faintings, yernings of a believer after his God, who is the very life of his ſoul, yea, never did poor infant more longingly deſire his mothers breaſt, or thirſty earth covet the drops of rain, or thirſty man cry out for drink, then a thirſting ſoul doth after the word which is the ſincere milk to feed it, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2, or at leaſt wiſe after God in the word; ſee the pantings of *David*, *Pſal.* 42. 1. *as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God: my ſoul thirſteth for God, even for the living God, when ſhall I come and appear before God*; and no wonder, where there is life there muſt be food; and God is the food of the ſoul, and in the Ordinances, the ſoul feeds upon him, here they have a foundation for their faith, hope, and confidence, to build upon, the promiſes are their food in their journey to heavenly *Canaan*, as *Mannah* was to *Iſrael* in the wilderneſs, the word is their fathers legacy wherein are promiſes for this life, and that to come; and yet alas, moſt men look upon it as if it did not concern them: oh my ſoul, is the Word of God ſo ſweet, and ſo precious to the Saints, how is it to thee? how ſtands thy ſtomack affected to it? is it ſweet to thy taſte? if not, ſurely it is a ſigne of a diſtemper: remember the days of old, when thou didſt travail many miles to hear the word, it was precious in thoſe days,

days, and thou fedſt upon it greedily: is it not as ſweet ſtill? ſurely the fault is not in it, but in thy ſelf, take heed leſt if thou play with thy meat, God take it from thee; perhaps thou feed'ſt but upon the huſk of duty, and not upon the kernel, upon the bare out-ſide performances, and not upon God in the duty, and this makes thee like *Iſrael* to loath this dry *Mannah*: take heed for the time to come, *remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy firſt work:* oh my God, diſcover thy ſelf more unto me in thine ordinances; let me feed upon thee in the duty, then will my appetite be renewed, and my ſoul ſhall long after this bread of life, and my graces which now ſtand at a ſtay ſhall then grow and flouriſh.

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## *Upon the ſting of a Bee.*

53. *Med.* BEing ſtung by the Bee when I went to taſte of the honey, I began to think, that thus it is with all earthly enjoyments, there is no pure unmixed pleaſure to be had in this world, there is in the beſt but a little pleaſure, and much pain, a little honey and many ſtings: the devil I know, many times hides the ſour, and preſents the ſweet; and makes ſin look amiable and pleaſant, and repre-

ſents

ſents the world in a beautiful dreſs, and promiſes pleaſure but pays pain: *All this* (ſaith he) *will I give thee*, to Chriſt, when his intention was to wrack and ruine both him, and us, and whoſoever will ſwallow the bait, will be taken with the hook: ſin (like the *Panther*) hides its head being deformed, and then allures by the paint and varniſh, which the devil hath put upon it, and ſo takes many captives, who never remember the ſting in the tail: we are apt ofttimes to dream of golden days, and an earthly paradice when it proves but a *Bachin*, a place of lamentation, a valley of tears; when the paint and varniſh is waſht off, ſin will appear in its own colours, and the cheat will appear; though it ſeem ſweet and pleaſant in the mouth, it will be bitter in the belly; and if we graſp the world too hard, it will like thorns run into the hands, nay, pierce to the heart: proſperity is always attended with danger, and many times ſucceeded with ſmart; honours end oft in diſgrace, riches are attended with cares and fear and certain troubles: *in the midſt of laughter the heart is ſorrowfull, and the end of that mirth is heavineſs, Pro.* 14. 13. *nulla eſt ſincera voluptas*, of carnal pleaſures (as one ſaith) a man may break his neck, before his faſt, they all prove *vanity and vexation of ſpirit*: theſe pleaſures may wet the mouth,

but

but not warm the heart, ſmooth the brow, but not fill the breaſt; they are but from the teeth outward, they dance to the timbrel and harp, but ere they are aware, they leap into hell, *Job.* 21. 12, 13. now they are ſo affraid of ſadneſs, that they baniſh all ſerioufneſs, *but the candle of the wicked ſhall ſoon be put out*: If the aking of the head, and the filthy belchings and vomittings, ſhould come before the drinking of the wine or ale, many would not buy that filthy pleaſure at ſo dear a rate, as they pay for it afterward: if the rottenneſs of the bones, and the loathſom diſeaſes not fit to be named, which uſually follow adultery, did precede it, many would not pay ſo dear for that beaſtly pleaſure: but alaſs, what is this to what follows, and the reckoning that is yet behinde? this is but as earneſt to the bargain: the gripes of an inraged conſcience, as ſome have felt them, eſpecially one hours torment in hell, would ſpoil all their mirth: but what is an hour to eternity? this would cure the adulterers luſt, and aſſwage the drunkards thirſt: But it is not only ſinful pleaſures but all earthly enjoyments that have a ſting in the tail: Crowns and kingdoms are not free from troubles, from fears and jealouſies, ſo that by that time an account be given of them, they are ſcarce worth gathering up

in

in the ſtreet: great eſtates have great temptations, and honour ofttimes is attended with envy; and bright ſhining lamps many times go out in a ſnuff, *Haman* and *Achitophel*, kings favourites end their lives in a halter, when meaner perſons have gone to their graves in peace. The talleſt *Ceders* are moſt liable to winde and weather: *Herod* that this day was eſteemed as a God, the next day is not fit to have fellowſhip with men, *Eccl.* 5. 12, 13. *the ſleep of a labouring man is ſweet, whether he eat little or much, but the abundance of the rich will not ſuffer him to ſleep*, &c. ſuch *riches are kept for the owners thereof to their hurt*: as the poor mans fare is not ſo high, ſo his care is not ſo great: the care of getting, the fear of keeping and the grief of loſing, like the *Vulture* feed upon the griping rich man continually, his abundance lies like a lump of lead upon his heart, and breaks his ſleep, and God ſometimes throws handfuls of fire into his conſcience: this dropſy of coveteouſneſs is as ſeldom cured, as the gout, phrenſy, or jealoſy; riches can make no man happy, few men content; the more they have, the more they deſire: *he that loveth ſilver, ſhall not be ſatisfied with ſilver*, *Eccl.* 5. 10. *non plus ſatiatur cor auro, quam corpus aura*, a man may have enough to ſink him, yet not to ſatisfie him: ſee their dan-

ger,

ger, *Jam.* 5. 1, 2, 3. *go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miſeries that are come upon you, your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth eaten, your gold and your ſilver is canker'd, and the ruſt of them ſhall be a witneſs againſt you, and ſhall eat your fleſh as it were fire,* &c. We may ſay of all theſe outward things, as the prophet doth of his axe, *alas, maſter for it was borrowed*; or as the wiſe man doth of honey, *we may eat as much as is ſufficient, but not too much, leſt we vomit, Pro.* 25. 26. be moderate in the uſe of all lawful comforts, and contentments, hang looſe to all earthly enjoyments, *licitis perimus omnes*; affect them not over-much leſt thou ſurfet of them: no earthly enjoyment but hath a mixture of gall and wormwood in them, more or leſs, no ſweet but hath ſome ſowr: marriage which many affect for the comforts ſake, and which doubtleſs is (if equally yoaked,) the happieſt relation, yet there is many that finde in it more pain then pleaſure, more ſour then ſweet, and more coſt and care then they expected: it ofttimes brings a man into poverty, and leaves him at beggars-buſh, and though the rich eſcape ſome of theſe ſnares, they fall into worſe: oh my ſoul, why art thou ſeeking honey in a waſps neſt, and eaſe and reſt in a thorny hedge, and true content where never man yet found

found it? wouldſt thou have a roſe without prickles, and honey without ſtings, and happineſs beneath the moon? all earthly enjoyments have a mixture of gall, and wormwood, but *the bleſſing of the Lord maketh rich, and he addeth no ſorrow with it, Pro.* 10. 22. where God will give his people ſtore without ſore, wealth without wo, and gold without guilt, and pleaſure without pain: endleſs joy, *everlaſting pleaſures are at his right hand for evermore, Pſal.* 16. 11. Oh my God give me my portion in thoſe pleaſures: ſatisfy me with that bread and water of life, and let me not feed upon huſks and vanity: let me *labour for that food which periſheth not but endureth to eternal life: let me provide bags that wax not old, a treaſure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth; no moth corrupteth, Luke* 12. 33.

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*Upon bees kil'd for their honey.*

54. *Med.* WHen I conſidered how the poor harmleſs, innocent creatures, the Bees, when by their continued labours, painful diligence, and unwearied travels, *had gathered their food in the Summer, and gathered their meat in the harveſt*, and ſtored themſelves, and furniſhed their little cels, and laid in proviſion for the enſuing win-

ter, and that without any trouble, wrong, or injury to any living creature; (a course which many rational creatures come short of, who either gather not at all, or if they do, it is by wrong and rapine) I say then when they were in the heighth of their prosperity, and in the midst of their plenty, yea, even at the fullest, suddenly they were surprized, stript of all, and cruelly butchered, and their lives taken away from them, and that for no other fault or injury but that they were rich, and for the honey they had painfully and honestly gathered; not unlike to the poor silly sheep, who when he hath gotten a great fleece, is soon shorn, and when he hath gotten a fat back is soon sent to the shambles; I thought this also resembled the unconstancy, and uncertainty of earthly enjoyments, for it is with rationall creatures, as it is with bruits, and insects, those that have most, are most in danger, *and riches oftimes are stored up for the hurt of the owners thereof*; many poor innocent persons in the world, *have been made transgressors, not for a word, Esay.* 39. 21. but for their wealth: This is usuall under the tyrannical government of the *Turk*, and other infidels, where the only crime (though others are objected) is their being rich; when they are once fat, they are soon sent to the shambles, they are like fed beasts, reserved

ſerved for the day of ſlaughter, and they are dealt with, as *Naboath* was for his vineyard, or *Uriah* for his wife; The one killed for no other offence but that he had a vineyard, the other for that he had a beautiful wife: oh world, how doſt thou deceive thoſe thou flattereſt, and betrayeſt thoſe that love thee beſt; is this thy dealing with thy friends, and favorites, and are thy *Syren-ſongs* ſuited to this end? *Solomon* tells us, *the rich mans wealth is his ſtrong-city, and as an high wall in his conceit*, *Pro.* 18. 11. *and* 10. 15. and this is the ſtrength wherein he truſted, *he that ſaith to the fine gold, thou art my confidence*, *Job* 31. 24. alas what a thin ſpiders web do they lean upon? what an *Egiptian* reed do they truſt to? but *curſed is that man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the living God.* Riches many times proves ſnares for the feet, yea, ruine for the ſoul. Many have been barbarouſly rob'd, yea kil'd and murthered for their wealth, when no other cauſe can be objected or pretended: ſome in their own houſe, ſome by the high-ways, yea, many by their near relations, and all to enjoy their wealth: many by their riches, honours or preferments procure envy, hatred, and malice, and ſtir up many enemies, who at length finde out a way to throw them down from the higheſt ſtep of the ladder to the

foot. *Cardinal Wolſey* might be an inſtance of this, and many more of latter days, where many have been brought from an high eſtate, to extream poverty, and well if they eſcaped with their lives. Wealthy Nations are a ſhrewd temptation to their Neighbouring Princes, and are a prey that oft falls into their laps, and the Uſurpers ſometimes are ſcarce warm in their ſeats, but they are ſhaken out alſo: the wheel of fortune is very unconſtant, the ſpoak which now is uppermoſt, is ſoon brought under; what bloudy war was the world ever embroyled in, but upon the account of rule, and government, of welath and riches, and the greateſt ſtorms fall oft upon the talleſt Cedars, when the poor ſhrubs are hardly ſhaken: how frequent was it in *Rome* in former days, and it is well if it be now bettered, to kill a *Naboth* meerly for his vineyard, and a rich man for his wealth; I wiſh ſome Courts of Judicature in our days do not more conſider the eſtate then the crime, and deſire not more the delinquents money, then thei. Reformation, *Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator*; poverty ſometimes, exempts real offenders from puniſhment, when riches lays open the innocent to ſufferings, but it is not the law but the corruption of officer that is here to be faulted, however by this we ſee, wealth is not always a ſure refuge here,

here, and it will be a pitiful refuge hereafter. Oh my ſoul, if there be ſuch danger in riches, and that ofttimes they prove hindrances, and not helps, ſnares, yea, hurtful ſnares, not only to the ſoul, but to the body alſo, and tend to take away both life and liberty, what cauſe haſt thou to bleſs God that he hath given thee *Agar's* petition, *neither poverty nor riches, but food convenient*, and doſt neither want nor abound: And though God hath taught thee like the poor birds *in diem vivere*, and ſo put thee in minde daily to beg for thy daily bread, yet he hath never failed to give it thee in due ſeaſon; hadſt thou had more wealth, thou mightſt have had more enemies, and conſequently more troubles; a little ſhip in a ſtorm may thruſt into any creek or harbour, where a great one cannot ride; hadſt thou held out a great ſail, thou hadſt been more toſſed in the tempeſt, and more like to have been ſplit upon one rock or other: it is not the greatneſs of the cage that makes the bird ſing, nor the greatneſs of the eſtate that brings inward joy, or cordiall content: oh my God, rather turn me in a bare paſture for ſtore, then feed me for the ſhambles; feed my ſoul, though my body pine, give me a portion in heavenly things, and it ſufficeth, for what good will the world do without thee?

*Upon the ſluggiſh drones.*

55. *Med.* WHen I conſidered the drones, thoſe ſloathfull ſluggiſh creatures, how they lived upon the labours of the induſtrious Bee, and fed upon that which they had carefully gathered together, and though they neither uſed pains nor diligence, yet were more big, fat, and well liking then their painfull Neighbours, upon whoſe ſpoil they lived: I obſerved alſo how the bees like a well-ordered commonwealth, before the approach of winter, jointly bandying themſelves againſt theſe their enemies, dragging them forth, and putting them to death, as thoſe that were enemies, and unfit to live, as if God and nature had taught them what the Apoſtle teacheth us, that *thoſe that will not labour ſhould not eat*, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 10. This conſideration made me think, I had ſeen many ſuch drones amongſt us, whoſe whole life is to eat, and to drink, and to ſleep, and that ſ and talk, and ſport and laugh themſelves fat, and of this kinde there are ſeveral ſorts, ſome idle, luſty vagrants that make a trade of idleneſs, and are the very plague-ſores of a Nation, that as body-lice live upon other mens ſweat, and labour, and it is a ſin to ſuccour them except in caſe of urgent neceſſity,

neceſſity, theſe having little to do but ſpend their time idlely, are uſually ſet on work by the devil; for idleneſs is the hour of temptation; theſe ſtanding pools are uſually full of vermine, they are like rats and mice, good for nothing but to devour the meat that others labour for; the very excrements of humane ſociety; but to let theſe paſs, there are other ſort of drones more pernicious then theſe, if yet they may be diſtinguiſhed, for they are oftentimes of the ſame litter, and thoſe are thieves; and many-times thoſe that are beggers by day, are thieves by night, thoſe forcibly take away what the other cannot beg, and wilfully break that command of God, *thou ſhalt not ſteal*, as the other do the other injunction, *in the ſweat of thy face thou ſhalt eat thy bread*; and God many times gives them their reward on earth, however God hath reſerved them their wages in hell, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. But there are other drones beſides theſe, which are the unprofitable burthens of the Common-wealth and the plague-ſore to the Nation; theſe are many, yea, too many of the Gentry of our Nation, of both ſexes, which indeed were fit to have led the van, of this ſloathfull company, and perhaps will not take it well, that others were preferred or named before them; thoſe that are aſhamed of nothing, except it be honeſt labour,

that only live to eat, to ſport, and recreate themſelves, and becauſe they go in a little more gaudy dreſs then others do, and providence hath allotted them a little larger portion of the worlds goods, then others have, think themſelves priviledged to be idle, as if that ſervant that God hath given moſt wages to, ſhould do him leaſt work: They minde nothing elſe but back and belly, ſports and vanity, as if God had placed them in the world, as *Leviathan* in the ſea, to ſport therein; but when their accounts are given up, it will appear otherwiſe; they with *Iſrael ſit down to eat, and to drink, and riſe up to play*, but I remember not where great ones are exempted from that puniſhment laid upon all mankinde after the fall, *in the ſweat of thy brows thou ſhalt eat thy bread*; but theſe ſeldom provoke ſweat, except at a tennis-court, or ſome worſe exerciſe: The morning is much of it ſpent in dreſſing them againſt dinner, and the afternoon is little enough for their recreations, and thus are their days, and weeks, and years ſpent to no purpoſe; and every day with them is a play-day, nay, the ſabbath it ſelf cannot be exempted: they often alſo change the courſe of nature, and turn day into night, and night into day; they ſleep by day, and revel in the night, as indeed fitteſt for their works of darkneſs:

they

they have neither head, nor heart, nor hand at work for the common good, neither are they any ways profitable, but many ways hurtfull in their generation, they live like drones on other mens labours, racking their rents, undoing their tenants, to maintain their pride and luxury, and cannot give an accompt of one day in a month, perhaps in a year really ſpent, either for benefit of ſoul or body. 'Tis obſerved that by the laws of *Mahomet*, there are none permitted to be idle, nay the great Turk himſelf is to exerciſe ſome manual exerciſe, but many that bear the name of Chriſtians, are more licentious, yet let no one think, that I charge all the Gentry thus, no, ſome of them, but oh too few, are diligent in their places, and not tainted with this ſloathfull negligence, neither that I expect manual labour from them, yet I think, ſuch might be found out, not unſutable for a Gentleman; but I think if they ſtudyed the Law, to be ſerviceable to the Common-wealth, or phyſick for the help of the poor, or Divinity for the good of themſelves and Neighbours, it might ready their accompts more then the courſes they take. There are too many of this gang in the Clergy alſo, many in the Univerſities, like *Abbey-lubbers*, live upon that given to better ends and uſes, many in the Miniſtry that have two or three

fat

fat Parſonages, *that feed themſelves, but not the flock*, but ſet them out to nurſe, to ſome, whoſe incomes will not maintain them to minde their ſtudies; but theſe may tremble, when they think upon their accompts: theſe are ſome, but not all the drones we have amongſt us; oh my ſoul, is idleneſs ſo deteſtable a vice? take heed of it, employ every talent God hath lent thee to thy Maſters glory, leſt thou meet with the doom of the unprofitable ſervant; ſpend all the time allowed thee in the world, either in thy general, or particular calling, and ſpend time on nothing thou wilt be unwilling to hear of another day: let not Chriſt when he calls for thee, nor the devil when he tempts thee, finde thee idle, leſt thou be not ready to open to the one, or reſiſt the other, leſt Chriſt reject thee, and the devil vanquiſh thee, and death uſher thee into outer darkneſs: oh my God, I have much work to do and but a little time to do it in, and it is work of great concernment, and much time already hath been waſted by me: Lord, incline my heart to diligence, and convince me of the neceſſity of *working while it is called to day, becauſe the night comes that no man can work.*

## *Upon the gaudy Waſp.*

56. *Med.* OBſerving the waſp in her gaudy dreſs, what an enemy ſhe was to the painful and laborious Bee, and was not content her ſelf to be idle, but robs alſo the Bees that do labour, and feeds upon that which this painful and induſtrious creature hath laid up againſt winter, and ſo ofttimes expoſes them to want and penury, yea, to death it ſelf, and if the poor bees make reſiſtance, kills them, and ſpoils their habitation; I obſerved alſo that this pernitious inſect, more hurtful then the drones before-mentioned, making no proviſion for winter before it comes, puts her head into a hole and dies: the conſideration of this occaſioned this following Meditation, I thought there were many ſuch waſps amongſt us, that is, ſuch as have the nature and diſpoſition of waſps, that are hurtful to many, helpful to none, that live an idle life, and live upon others labours, and not their own, and making no proviſion for death or eternity, are then utterly deſtitute of what is neceſſary here, with the rich man, *Luk.* 16. 19. *&c. they are cloathed in purple, and fine linnen, and fare deliciouſly every day,* and at laſt would beg *a drop of water to cool their tongues, but cannot obtain it,* but ſhall have puniſhment without

without pitty, miſery without mercy, ſorrow without ſuccour, crying without compaſſion, miſchief without meaſure, torment without end, and paſt imagination. Among the reſt of theſe gaudy waſps, we may rank many griping Land-lords; ſome Land-lords are of a better complexion, bnt they are too few; but too many are guilty of *grinding the faces of the poor, and the ſpoil of the poor is in their houſes, Eſay.* 3. 14, 15. they make their tenants ſerve in the very fire, and *weary themſelves for very vanity, Hab.* 2. 13. and are like unto the *Egyptian* task-maſters, force the tale of their bricks, and not allow them ſtraw, they pluck not only the meat from their mouths, and the cloaths from their backs, but the very fleſh from their bones: they drink not only their tears, but their very ſweat and bloud, and all too little to ſatisfy their greedy humours, they ſqueeſe ſo many tears from them in their life time, that they have none left to ſhed for them at their death, they by racking their rents, and their cruel extortion draws many tears from their eyes, and ſobs from their hearts, but God will put thoſe tears into his bottle, and thoſe ſobs into his book, and will vindicate their wrongs: how oft may we ſee greedy Land-lords force their tenants to feed their dogs with what ſhould feed their own children, a barbarous cuſtome, which will

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riſe up in judgment againſt them another day: They deal with their tenants as they do with their horſes; when they have tired them or rid them out of breath, they call for a freſh one, and ſhew not ſo much mercy on them, as on their dogs, whom they cheriſh if weak or weary, but when the poor tenant with all his pains and diligence can no longer ſatisfy their greedy humours, they turn them out of doors, ſeize upon their eſtates, perhaps caſt them into priſon, *till they have paid the utmoſt farthing*, to the ruinating of their families, and expoſing them to beggery, and all this is to maintain their pride and luxury: theſe men act as if they were the ſole proprietors, and muſt never give an accompt to any other Maſter, but let ſuch remember the parable of the man that owed ten thouſand talents, and would not forgive his brother a hundred pence, but caſt him into priſon, *Mat.* 18. 23. *he himſelf was caſt in till he had paid the utmoſt farthing*, thoſe ſhall have judgment *without mercy, that have ſhewed no mercy*, *Jam.* 2. 13. thoſe that will not forgive others, ſhall not be forgiven themſelves; let ſuch remember the rich man, *Luk.* 16. 19. who 'tis conceived, refuſing to give a bit of bread to *Lazarus*, was himſelf denied a drop of water by *Abraham*. But theſe are not all the gaudy waſps that trouble the laborious bees, there are many rich men that undo

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their poor neighbours, with unjuſt and vexatious Law-ſuits, that oppreſs them with wrongs, injuries, and unjuſt vexations, and make bold thus to do, becauſe they are too great for them to grapple with; theſe great flies break through the net, there being alſo too many of theſe waſps in places of Judicatory, civil and Eccleſiaſtical; I accuſe not all, and I think no wiſe man will juſtify all: many Lawyers to maintain their ſtate and garb, knowingly undo their clients, ſome by taking bribes, to prevent juſtice, ſome by unneceſſary delays, ſome for favour and friendſhip, they either break the neck of a good cauſe, or ſuck the clients dry before they tell them their cauſe is bad: Eccleſiaſtical Courts are not much better, ſome think far worſe, many officers there do as greedily prey upon the poor as ever a hungry fly did upon a galled horſe back, and many times make ſores where they finde none, and the greateſt offences are not always puniſhed with the hardeſt ſtroaks, but preaching and praying is eſteemed worſe then ſwearing and curſing; and that reformation of ſin is not intended though pretended, is apparent, when poor adulterers are let alone who are not able to pay the fees of the Court, when the richer *are made offenders for a word, Iſa.* 29. 21. let not any that are not guilty apply this to themſelves: but there

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are alſo too many in the Miniſtry that may reade their character, *Eſay* 56. 10. &c. but the time is coming theſe cauſes will be called over again, and then it will evidently appear, *who are the troublers of Iſrael:* oh my ſoul, is there ſuch oppreſſion, ſuch injuſtice in the world, take heed of having a heart or hand in any ſuch matter, *come not into their ſecrets, and unto their aſſembly*; the time is coming that thoſe that have been fed with ſin, will vomit up what they ſo greedily ſwallowed, and thoſe alſo that rob *the poor will be found to reproach their maker, Pro.* 14. 31. God is the poor mans king, and he will defend him, deſtroy his enemies, and will not ſuffer the injuries offered them to be unpuniſhed; winter will come when theſe waſps will dye: oh my God, ſuffer me not now to feed upon thoſe morſels, that I muſt chew for ever in hell; if I have but little, let it not be with a curſe.

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## *Upon the painted Butterfly.*

57. *Med.* WHen I obſerved the curious gaudy dreſs of the painted butterfly, her various colours, and her ſpecious ſhew, and took notice how ſhe ſpent her time in paint and plaiſter, and all to adorn her ſelf and make her ſeem beautiful,

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when the laborious *Bee* improved her time to better ends and purpoſes, *viz.* to provide in ſummer for winter, and to gather her food in the harveſt: I conſidered alſo, that notwithſtanding all this paint, this proud creature was but a poor inſect, nay, an unprofitable creature doing hurt but no good; and when I caught her to take a further view, ſhe did but foul my fingers; I conſidered alſo what would be the end of this ſo proud, ſo ſluggiſh, and ſo uſeleſs a creature, and found againſt winter ſhe put her head into a hole and died, and there was the end of all her bravery, when the painfull Bee, hath her life preſerved by her diligence; this made me think, that this creature did much reſemble many of the Gallants of our times, eſpecially of the female ſex, though others may take it ill if they be excluded, which are good for little but to paint, and dreſs, and ſpend their time as vainly as ever the butterfly doth, theſe content not themſelves with their own native beauty, or with the form and faſhion God made them in, but caſt themſelves into another mould, and take upon them another ſhape then God made them; and it is to be feared God will never own them for his, when they are thus transformed, or rather deformed themſelves with their own hands, and what is the reaſon of all this

hands,

paint and plaiſter, but to make traps to catch fools? their hair are ſnares to catch men, as the fiſher of his hairs makes lines to catch fiſh, or as the ſpiders web is to take flys, for *if there be no wine in the cellar, why hangs the buſh*? what doth this gaudy dreſs ſignifie but a laſcivious minde, and to let the world know in what ware they deal, and how welcome ſuch a motion that brings profit or pleaſure with it would be to them; and like the ſigne at the ale-houſe-door, promiſes entertainment for money: what doth this gawdy dreſs ſignify leſs then a laſcivious minde, when they ſpend great part of their time in attiring, painting, dreſſing, and ſpotting themſelves, this is their morning devotion; and their afternoon ſervice is not much unlike, for that is moſtly ſpent in ſports and merryments, in plays and interludes, in idle viſits, or perhaps worſe employments, the devil many times makes uſe of theſe gaudy flys to fiſh for ſouls, wherewith he baits his hooks, and many unwary youths are caught with theſe lime-twigs: Is it not a wonder that any of *Adams* ſons, or *Eves* daughters (and yet both ſexes are guilty) ſhould take more pains for hell, then others do for heaven, yea, and be at more coſt and care alſo; for pride is more coſtly then humility, yea, is it not a wonder to ſee perſons

pride in that which is the fruit of ſin, and a cover to ſhame, *viz.* their cloaths, which uſually are but the excrements of beaſts or inſects, or at leaſt of as poor an original; this is a ſure ſigne of a worthleſs piece, to be like a bubble, or bladder, blown up with a little winde: how many are there that are like the *Cinamon*-tree, the bark is better then the body, yea, ſometimes the cloaths are better then all the eſtate beſides: Many that are aſhamed of their deformity, yet when their crooked ill-ſhap't bodies are covered, are proud of their beauty: but what will become of thoſe at death, that have ſpent their time in paint and ſpot, and neglected to adorn the ſoul? it were well with them if with the butterfly they could finde a hole to dye in, that they might never more be ſeen, but this will not be, they muſt be ſeen in their own colours, when all the varniſh will vaniſh; ſincerity will abide the fire: I fear others alſo are guilty of this paint and flouriſh, as ſome Miniſters, who paint their Sermons not to profit but to pleaſe, and preach not in that plain convincing way Chriſt and his Apoſtles did, but woo more for themſelves then for Chriſt, and fiſh not for ſouls but for popular applauſe, and ſeek not to ſet the crown upon Chriſts head, but their own: oh my ſoul, beware of theſe three grand

grand enemies to thy ſalvation, pride, idleneſs, and hypocriſy; where theſe bear ſway, the ſoul never proſpers: pride is the maſter-pock, if it ſtrike to the heart it will ſurely kill thee: *pride goes before deſtruction, and a haughty ſpirit before a fall; God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Jam.* 4. 6. he defies thoſe that deify themſelves, witneſs *Herod* and *Lucifer*: grace grows not in high mountains, but in low vallies, the leaſt degree of pride ſets it ſelf againſt God, the higheſt degree ſets *it ſelf above God*, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 4. and as pride, ſo idleneſs is a deadly ſin, *pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs* were *Sodoms* ſin, and doubtleſs they are *Englands* ſins alſo, and make many thouſands fall ſhort of heaven, and the time is coming hypocriſy alſo will appear in its own colours, the paint will not abide the fire: oh my God, how many poor ſouls ſplit themſelves upon theſe rocks and make *ſhipwrack of faith and a good conſcience*: Lord, keep me humble, make me ſincere, and help me to be diligent, ſo ſhall I be happy for ever.

*Upon a gnat playing with the candle.*

58. *Med.* WHen I obſerved a gnat play ſo long with the candle, that at length ſhe burnt her wings, was taken priſoner, ſuffered for her folly, paid dear for pleaſure, and was expoſed to a cruel death, even to end her life in the flames; I thought this reſembled poor man that ſo long dallies with ſin, and plays with the devils temptations, that at laſt he is ſnared in his limetwigs, and fettered in his gins, and *led captive by him at his pleaſure*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. thoſe that he thus takes in his ſnares he uſeth worſe then *Sampſon* was uſed by the *Philiſtins*, he puts out their eyes, and then makes them grinde in his mill: poor man is like a fiſh nibling ſo long at the bait, till at laſt he ſwallows the hook, or like the unwary bird, ſo eagerly falls upon the prey, that they are taken in the net: the devil like a cunning fowler holds out the bait, covers the hook, and hides himſelf behind the buſh, ſo that they ſee not the hand that holds it; he doth not uſually appear in his colours, he takes not the drunkard and thruſts him into the Ale-houſe by the head and ſhoulders, this were the way to fright him, and make him know his maſter, and leave his ſervice, but he hides himſelf, and ſhews the bait,

bait, and ſets a companion to call him, and ſo he ſwallows the hook, while he obſerves not the hand that holds it; and the oftener he is taken, the bolder he grows, till at laſt he ſits down in the chair of the ſcorner, makes a mock of ſin, grows incorrigible; and then let all the men in the world, nay, let God himſelf ſay what he will to the contrary, he doth ſin, and will ſin, and ſo he hath plaied ſo long with the candle, that his wings are burnt, and he is taken priſoner, and which is worſe, like *Vliſſes* men, when by *Circes* charms they were turned into ſwine, and were content thus to be, and would not reaſſume their former ſhape, ſo theſe delight ſo in husks and ſwill, that they know not, deſire not any other happineſs: Oh how good had it been for many, if they had taken *Solomons* counſel, *Pro.* 23. 31. *look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth it ſelf aright, at the laſt it biteth like a ſerpent, and ſtingeth like an adder*; many men die with the wound in the eye; it is not unlawful to look, but by looking comes luſting, for ſin is oft let in at the window of the eye, or by the door of the ear: *Peter* truſting too much to his own ſtrength, thruſt himſelf upon the temptation of wicked company, till he was ſnared: ſinners by cuſtome grow bold in ſin, and

come at last to dare God to strike them, and God sometimes accepts of the challenge, and by his immediate hand vindicates himself and shews them their folly; thus he dealt by the old world, thus by *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; thus by *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, by *Ananias* and *Saphira*, *Herod* and many others; There are many that like the bird gaze at the bough, till they are fetcht down with the bolt; they give their eyes leave to wander, and their hearts to contemplate wickedness, and so long nibble at the bait of beauty, that they at last swallow the hook: they are like the young man void of understanding. taken in the strumpets snares, *Pro.* 7. 7, 8. *&c.* the devil feels which way their pulse beats, and suits his temptations accordingly, provides them of Mates, and sets one *Dalilah* or other to binde them, fit lettice for such lips, a fit helve for such a hatchet; how good is *Solomons* counsel, *Pro.* 6. 25. *lust not after her beauty in thy heart, neither let her take thee with her eye-lids, for by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread, and the adultereſs will hunt for the precious life*: yet many like *Solomons* harlot before-mentioned are grown audacious, and even glory in their sin, and pleade that adultery is but a trick of youth, but let them know, it is such a trick that turned *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*

*rah* into aſhes, and ſent twenty four thouſand *Iſraelites* at once to their graves, and many thouſands to hell, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. 10. For heaven that ſpewed out the fallen angels, will not lick up again the unrighteous: ſuch therefore that play with this candle, let them beware they be not burnt in the flame: if they do eſcape a fire in their bones, they are like to meet with a fire in their conſciences, which (if not quenched with the tears of true repentance) will never out, nor the worm never die: it is not long before we all ſhall dance after deaths pipe down to the chambers of darkneſs, and we ſhall make our bed in the duſt, and then the ſport will be over, and a reckoning time will come, when an account will be required: But what *Solomon* obſerved in his time is true in ours, *Eccl.* 8. 11. *becauſe ſentence againſt an evil doer is not ſpeedily executed, therefore the hearts of the ſons of men are wholely ſet in them to do wickedly*: but ſuch will know, forbearance is no acquittance; when the meal is ended, the reckoning will be required: the ſleeping of vengeance cauſeth the overflowing of ſin, but judgment will be awakned at length, *Eſay.* 3. 12. *wo to the wicked, it ſhall go ill with him, the reward of his hands ſhall be given him*: oh my ſoul, beware of the devils temptations, how fair and ſpecious ſoever they may ſeem, they

are indeed but bitter pils, guilded over, or rather poyſon offered in a golden cup; if thou ſee the bait, look at the hook, and obſerve the hand that holds it; make no peace with ſin, this will certainly break thy peace with God, and thy own conſcience; the devil let him promiſe never ſo fair, never intends thy good; take heed therefore of the occaſions of ſin, cruſh the *cockatrice-egge ere it break forth into a ſerpent*; *daſh* Babilons *children while they are young*; give not entertainment to a ſinful thought, come not near the door of the harlots houſe; foſter not any of the devils brats, nor keep his counſel: oh my God, except thou watch over me, I cannot be ſafe: Lord, be thou my protector, and defend me from my ſpiritual enemies.

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*Upon many creatures ſeemingly dead in winter.*

59. *Med.* WHen I conſidered how diverſe inſects, ſome ſerpents and other animals which in the heat of ſummer are active, quick and lively, but God not having given them wiſdome, nor any inclination to make any proviſion for the future, and yet by the mighty power of God, they are preſerved without meat; for either they die, or ſleep, or ſeem ſo to

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do, yet in the following ſpring, when the ſun returns in his ſtrength, they recover, and the *ſpecies* is continued: This made me admire the wonderful providence of the only wiſe God, that theſe creatures ſhould live the one half of the year without food, if at leaſt they do live, or if really dead, (as ſome of them ſeem to be) that they ſhould be reſtored to life again: for the production of the ſilk-worm and ſome others is ſtrange and wonderfull, firſt a ſmall egge, then a worm, then a fly, which ſoon dies, leaving ſome eggs behinde for the next year, which of themſelves produce the *ſpecies*: this minded me of Gods queſtion to the prophet, and of his anſwer; Saith God, *can theſe dry bones, live? and he ſaid, Lord, thou knoweſt*: 'Tis not in mans power to preſerve them, nor beyond the power of God; with man it ſeems impoſſible, but *with God all things are poſſible. Mat.* 9. 26. men may want of their will for want of power, nature her ſelf may be interrupted in her courſe, as it was when the fire burnt not up the three worthys, nor the water drown *Peter* walking upon it: Satan may be croſt, and chained up, that he cannot hurt, but who can hinder the Almighty, there is nothing can over-match an omnipotent arm: This made me think alſo, God can preſerve his childrens lives in deſpight

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of his enemies: if they take away their meat (ſaith the Martyr) God can take away their hunger; why not as well as he doth the life of other creatures? and he will do it rather then his promiſe ſhall fail: *Elijah* goes in the ſtrength of one meal forty days, and had God pleaſed, it might have been forty years, for he could have preſerved the *Iſraelites* forty years in the wilderneſs without food as well as with food, from heaven, and as well as he preſerved *their garments from waxing old*, *Deut.* 29. 5. *I have led you forty years in the wilderneſs, your cloaths are not waxen old upon you, and thy ſhoe is not waxen old upon thy foot*; they needed not to care *what they ſhould eat, or what they ſhould drink, or wherewithall they ſhould be cloathed*; for God made proviſion of all this, they were maintained at Gods proper coſt and charges; methoughts alſo this ceſſation of action in theſe creatures in winter, did much reſemble ſleep, which if God pleaſed might be as long in other animals; and were it not common, would be thought wonderful, and little differing from death it ſelf, and yet experience ſhews us, that which ſeems to deſtroy nature, doth reſtore and refreſh it, or it is like to a ſwoon when the ſymptomes of death are upon a man, yea, in ſome diſtempers the ſymptomes of life for many hours together

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are ſcarcely diſcerned ; but above all, it reſembles our lying in the grave , and our riſing again at the reſurrection, for the body ſleeps in the duſt, till the laſt day ( as theſe creatures do in their holes till the winter is paſt , and the ſpring approacheth , and the ſilkworm never receives life till the Mulbery-trees leaves, which is their food ; ) and then they ſhall be revived by the ſun of righteouſneſs, and life put into them ; then *theſe dry bones ſhall live* : This I know ſome queſtion, and ſome deny, poſſibly becauſe they cannot fathome the depth of this providence ; and were they not convinc't by yearly experience of the other , they would deny that alſo, and would think it could not be , that creatures ſhould have their life preſerved the one half of the year ( at leaſt ) without food, becauſe they know not how it ſhould be ; But I think few articles of our faith are more clearly proved in Scripture then this of the reſurrection ; but many men I fear are wilfully blinde , their lives and converſations being ſo debaucht, they would believe, at leaſt wiſh they could believe, there were no reſurrection of the body, yea, that the ſoul were mortal as well as the body, and that the death of the one were the deſtruction of the other alſo, but the time is coming, they ſhall finde the contrary to their ſorrow : both

ſcripture

ſcripture and reaſon ſpeak plainly, that the ſoul is immortal, and that the body partaking with it in holineſs or ſin, ſhall alſo partake with it in weal or wo; and that there will be a day of retribution, when thoſe that now ſuffer for Chriſt ſhall then reign with him, and thoſe that ſin, ſhall ſuffer for their ſin; the contrary to this cannot ſtand with ſcripture-revelations, the threatnings of the law, the promiſes of the Goſpel, nor with divine juſtice it ſelf; and why ſhould any think it impoſſible for God to gather our duſt together, and raiſe up our dead bodies at the laſt, who do believe that there is a God, and that he hath made not only man but the whole creation of nothing, and that this God is juſt and will make good both his promiſes and threatnings, and nothing is too hard for an omnipotent arm? oh my ſoul, diſtruſt not Gods word, queſtion not his power, he that can make all things of nothing, can of thy ſcattered aſhes raiſe up thy dead body to life, and re-unite it to thy hould, and he that ſaith, he will do it, will certainly perform it; heaven and earth ſhall paſs, but not one tittle of his word ſhall paſs till all be fulfilled; call not in queſtion the power and providence of God, but labour *to have a part in the firſt reſurrection, that the ſecond death may have no power*; get fitted for

for death and judgement, get ſin pardoned and ſubdued, which is the ſting of death; get grace implanted, and thy ſoul married unto Chriſt, then needſt thou not fear death, nor the reſurrection: oh my God, ſtrengthen my faith, confirm my hope, and encreaſe my love to thee, and let me long for the time that I may enjoy thee in glory, and lie for ever in the arms of my beloved.

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*Upon beggers at the door.*

60. *Med.* WHen I ſaw ſome luſty able perſons fit for ſervice and other employment begging at the door, I began to conſider, how diſagreeing this courſe of life was to the word of God, who had commanded men, *in the ſweat of their brows they ſhould eat their bread*; this is a law laid upon all ſorts of men, to ſweat out a poor living, brow or brain muſt ſweat for it, or our bread is eaten ere it be earned; God would not have a begger in *Iſrael*, and the Apoſtles will was, *thoſe that would not labour ſhould not eat*, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 6, 10, 14. thoſe that have enough to live on, muſt not be idle, much leſs thoſe that have nothing, yet many live like rats and mice, only to devour what others labour for; paradice that was mans ſtore-houſe was alſo his work-houſe, God

God ſet him *to dreſs the garden*; and there ſhould be none, that like body-lice feed upon other mens ſweat; ſuch idle perſons often times are ſet on work by the devil; for idleneſs is the hour of temptation, and ſtanding-waters are uſually full of vermine; Nay, how diſagreeing is this courſe of life with the laws of the land, which making other proviſion for the poor, ſtigmatize theſe wanderers by the name of rogues, and appoint them to be ſtockt and whipt, and ſent back to the place of their birth or laſt abode, and inflicts a penalty upon thoſe that relieve them: The great *Turk*, that grand *Seignior* is not excepted, for he hath a trade, and is dayly to labour with his hands; yea, Divines in all ages, ancient, and modern and of all perſwaſions, have exclaimed againſt this courſe of life, and eſteemed ſuch perſons to be the plague-ſore of the Nation, and not to be tolerated in a well-ordered Common-wealth, they are a diſhonour to the Church they live in, and to the Countrey they inhabit, and the heathens as well as the Chriſtians have made laws to puniſh them: Theſe and the like conſiderations made me think correction to be the fitteſt alms, and their reſtraint might hinder a great deal of ſin acted by them, and be a means to reduce them under government civil and Eccleſiaſtical, which

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now live like lawleſs perſons under none, and neither fear God, nor obey men, but are the unprofitable burthens of the earth: But on the other ſide, when I conſidered how little proviſion notwithſtanding in the law was made for the poor in moſt places, and that ſome Pariſhes were not able, others were not willing to give any tollerable allowance to poor painfull houſeholders, overcharged with children, and conſidering that many painful men by reaſon of the dearneſs of corn theſe two laſt years, and the ſcarcity of work occaſioned thereby, and the hardneſs that doth poſſeſs the hearts of many of their rich Neighbours, were reduced to very great ſtreights and neceſſities; many there are that cry out againſt the idle, that will not ſet the diligent to work: and when I conſidered that ſuppoſing a man had work, how long he would be earning 8. or 9. ſhillings, the price of a meaſure of corn, and how ſhort a time this would ſerve a numerous family, that depends only upon his get, I admired Gods providence that kept poor people alive in theſe hard times, and began to pity poor houſeholders that were fain to creep out of their cels to ſave their lives, and to blame hard-hearted worldlings that force them ſo to do, and thruſt them upon this illegal courſe, when a much better may be taken;

taken: for doubtleſs it is better for *England* to keep their poor working then playing, and for a pariſh to add ſomething to their ſupply then force them to ſeek all; but many can finde Scripture againſt begging, but no food againſt ſtarving; but let thoſe that think charity is not their duty as well as diligence the duty of the poor, let them conſult ſuch Scriptures as thoſe that follow, and when rich men do what they are required, let them exact dilligence from the reſt, and ſpare not, and not beat their fellow-ſervants till they cry, and then beat them for crying, *Pſal.* 41. 1. *bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble*, *Pro.* 28. 27. *he that giveth unto the poor, ſhall not lack, but he that hideth his eyes ſhall have many a curſe*; you ſee, not getting but giving is the way to wealth; 'tis the bountiful man ſhall have the bleſſing, when the covetous ſhall inherit the curſe both from God and man, *Pro.* 19. 17. *he that hath pitty upon the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given, ſhall he paid him again*; it is not given but lent; given to man, lent to God, nay, lent upon uſury: *fœneratur Domino*, who bindes himſelf to repay it, and gives ſecurity for it under his own hand; Chriſt himſelf promiſed the young man, *Mark.* 10. 21. if he would *ſell what he had, and give to the poor, that*

*that then he ſhould have treaſure in heaven*; but how many are there like Cardinal *Bembus*, that would not leave his part in *Paris* for his part in *paradice*; a man may borrow ten pounds of many men upon his bare word, ſooner then God can borrow ten pence with all his promiſes; thoſe that are poor may be ſo for them: oh, my ſoul, bleſs God, this is not thy caſe; that thou waſt never reduced to thoſe ſtraights as many poor men have been; put on bowels of compaſſion to thoſe whoſe caſe it is, and what thou canſt, relieve thoſe that are truly indigent, and if thou canſt not, diſtinguiſh between the indigent and negligent; tis better give ten alms to the unworthy, then turn away one truly hungry wanting perſon empty; remember what anſwer thou wilt make to God at judgment, *Mat.* 25. 41. oh my God, help me to improve my ſmall talents to thy glory, and to have charity in my heart though little in hand to beſtow, thou requireſt according to what thou giveſt.

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*Upon the ſinging of birds.*

61. *Med.* WHen I obſerved in a warm morning in the ſpring-time how merrily the birds did chirp and ſing,

in every tree and hedge and buſh, and in their language did chaunt out their makers praiſe and their benefactors glory, and what various tunes and notes they ſent forth, each one adding ſomething to the melody, that the muſick was not unpleaſant, that theſe little choriſters warbled forth; This occaſioned me this following Meditation, theſe poor birds that neither *reap nor ſow, nor carry into barns*, they neither cark, nor care, nor moil, nor toil, but live upon their fathers providence, and when they have eat their breakfaſt, know not where to have their dinner, but depend upon their makers allowance, and yet how merry they are, and unconcerned they ſeem to be, void of care and fretting fear; when their ſtomacks crave, they ſeek their meat where divine providence doth direct them, they take no care for the morrow, but *in diem vivunt*, and God makes proviſion for them, *Pſal.* 145. 15, 16. *they all wait upon thee, and thou giveſt them meat in due ſeaſon, thou openeſt thy hand, and thou ſatisfyeſt the deſire of every living thing*; The conſideration of this made me reflect upon my own ſelf, and to obſerve my own faults and failings: oh my ſoul, art not thou juſtly reproved by theſe poor creatures, and haſt thou not behaved thy ſelf worſe to thy God, then theſe have done? *art not thou better then many ſparrows*?

*sparrows*? why then doſt thou deſpond more then they, and diſtruſt thy fathers providence? haſt not thou more promiſes to depend upon, then ever they had? and more experiences of divine providence both in former deliverances, and continual protection and proviſion? thou haſt the uſe of reaſon which they want, to aſſiſt thee, and ſome comfortable hopes of the truth of grace, and that God hath entertained thee, and received thee into his family, married thee to his Son, and adopted thee for his childe; thou haſt the word and Ordinances to bear thee up, and many promiſes of divine protection and proviſion which they have not, and the experience of many years wherein he did *never leave thee nor forſake thee*, but made comfortable proviſion for thee, and many encouragments from God himſelf; reade *Mat.* 6. 25. to the end, and *Matt.* 10. throughout; and ſee whether there be any cauſe of deſponding, it is thy duty *in nothing to be carefull, but to make thy requeſt known to God in prayer*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 32. Children make their needs known to their parents, whom if they can pleaſe, they fear no want, they take little care where to have the next meals meat, or the next ſuit of cloaths, neither need they, their parents take care for them, and theſe very birds if wiſely obſerved, and dilligently hee-

ded, might weed those carking cares out of thy heart, and to cast all thy care upon God, that careth for thee: But though thou hast not wanted, thou art questioning with *Israel*, *Can God prepare a table in the wilderness? Psal.* 78. 19. what if this cruise of oyl fail, and this barrel of meal be wasted? what shall I eat? what shall I drink then, or wherewithall shall I be cloathed? if these or these things happen, what will become of me or mine? what if famine come, or what if I be put into prison, or that little I have be taken from me? what if I be banished, sent into some remote wilderness, *&c.* how shall I be fed? how shall I be cloathed? what will become of my wife and children? *&c.* as if when the pipe is cut, there were no water in the fountain; are not these sometimes thy thoughts and fears? and though thou hast had many silencing providences, and God unexpectedly hath removed thy doubts, and answered thy objections, yet upon new apprehensions of danger, how hard dost thou finde it to trust God, upon his bare word, when the world frowns, and will not pass for payment? or to depend upon him when deliverance is out of sight? hath not Christ himself told thee, that if thou *seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, all other things shall be added to thee*, *Mat.* 6. 33. grace is the way

to

to glory, and holineſs to happineſs, if men be not gracious there is no heaven to be had; if they are, they ſhall have heaven, and earth alſo: *for godlineſs hath the promiſe of this life and that to come*: all earthly enjoyments that are good for thee, are entayled upon piety; but alaſs, the ſtrength of the ground is ſo ſpent in nouriſhing weeds and traſh, that the good corn is ſtarved and choaked: *theſe thorns do choak the ſeed, and it becomes unfruitful*; temporall things are *nec vera nec noſtra*, but there are certain and durable riches, that *nec prodi, nec eripi, nec ſurripi poſſunt*; he that enjoys them cannot loſe them; hath not God promiſed, *he will never leave thee, nor forſake thee*? and is not this better then if all the Kings upon earth had ſaid ſo to thee, *that thou ſhalt want nothing that is good*, and wouldſt thou have that which is hurtful? was he ever known to be worſe then his word? and canſt thou imagine he will firſt fail thee? will he that feeds the fowls, and cloaths the graſs, ſtarve the children? oh my ſoul, make ſure of the main, and uſe diligence for the reſt, caſt thy care upon God, and make thy requeſts known to God, and he can as well deny himſelf, as deny thee in any lawful ſuit; five thouſand years experience cannot produce an inſtance of any godly man that was forſaken, make ſure of the main bargain, and all other things will

be given in as paper and packthred: oh my God, *I believe help thou my unbelief*: pardon my distracting and distrustful thoughts, increase my faith, silence my doubts and fears, by clearing up my evidences for heaven.

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*Upon provision made for birds in a hard winter.*

62. *Med.* WHen (after a cold pinching frosty winter, wherein the snow had long covered the face of the earth, and hid it from man and beast; the trees and bushes for many weeks together being loaded and burthened with it) I saw and considered the numberless number of birds of all sorts and kindes, that escaped in that hard season, when all sorts of provision seemed to be cut off, and survived these troubles, which threatened them with death, when neither the rivers which were frozen up, nor the fields which were covered, nor the trees nor bushes could give them relief, yet God provided them their meat, and they received it at his hands, and were nourished by his providence, when in my apprehension they were like to have been lost and starved, and famished for want of food, especially some of the wilder sort, that neither frequent house nor barn, from whom all sorts of provision seemed to be

lockt,

lockt up, or cut off, but God fed them out of his ſtorehouſe, *Pſal.* 147. *he gives the beaſt his food, and the young ravens when they cry*; hence it is that our Saviour Chriſt ſends his querellous and deſponding ſervants to ſchool to the fouls of heaven to learn to depend upon their fathers providence, *Mat.* 6. 26. *conſider the fouls of the air, they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly father feedeth them, are ye not much better then they? ask the beaſts* (ſaith Job) *and they ſhall teach thee, and the fouls of the air, and they ſhall tell thee; or ſpeak to the earth, and it ſhall teach thee, and the fiſhes of the ſea ſhall declare unto thee; who knoweth not in all theſe, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this, in whoſe hand is the ſoul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankinde? Job.* 12. 7, 8, 9, 10. as he made them all, ſo he it is that maintains them, he takes care for the oſtriches young ones, and *feeds the young ravens when they cry, Pſal.* 147. 9. they take no care nor have care taken for them, yet are they provided for; did man but look up to the birds or down to the lillies, he would not ſo diſpond, and ſo diſtruſt Gods providence: ſhall the great houſekeeper of the world water his flowers, prune his plants, fodder his cattle, feed his birds, and yet ſtarve his children? it cannot be: is there *not a ſpar-*

*you can fall to the ground without his providence?* nor a hair from our head without his knowledge, and can we think he takes no care of us? *Mat.* 10. 29, 30. one pearl is more worth then many pebles, and *the righteous is more excellent then his neighbour*: as one lark is worth many kites, God will have a care of his jewels, they are as the apple of his eye; thouſand thouſands of thoſe fouls there are that man takes no care of, makes no proviſion for, knows not upon what they feed, yea, ſeek their deſtruction, ſome out of envy, as birds of prey, others to feed upon, yet God maintained them in their ſeveral *ſpecies*, almoſt ſix thouſand years at his own coſt and charges: Man by all his diligence cannot make proviſion for them, neither can he deſtroy them by all his cunning: God hides them as well as feeds them, and they are not beholding to man for their lives; The thoughts of this methinks may ſilence thoſe Atheiſtical conceipts that are apt to ariſe in wicked mens hearts, that there is no God, when they ſee his providence ſo plainly aſſerted, and may ſilence thoſe diſtruſtful thoughts and fears which are too apt to creep in, and to diſturb the quiet and tranquillity of the hearts of Gods own people upon the apprehenſion of approaching danger, and threatning wants, when they obſerve thoſe leſſer creatures guided

ded by an overruling providence; and if God preserve every *species* of his creatures notwithstanding men combine their destruction, no wonder if he preserve his own Church amidst their numerous enemies: oh my soul, while there is life and breath in that body of thine, praise, bless, and magnifie God for his works of providence to his creatures, in making provision for all the works of his hands, especially for his Church whom he feeds as a few lambs in the midst of innumerable wolves, and they are not able to devour them: and though many times he suffers some to be worried, yet it proves rather the augmentation then the diminution of his flock, *the blood of the Martyrs proves the seed of his Church*, yet let these convincing providences to thy self never be forgotten, but let them breed in thee a thankfull remembrance of his benefits and some answerable returns to God for his mercies which thou hast had, beyond expectation: let his continued series of providences banish out of thy heart all atheistical thoughts and conceipts, and also all desponding, despairing, distrustful thoughts, and carking care: keep in Gods way, and he will never forsake thee: he that feeds the young ravens when they cry, will not suffer thee to starve nor shut his ear to thy prayer; if thou leave him, he will leave

thee;

thee: oh my God, all my springs are in thee, all my mercies flow from thee; though the pipe be cut, Lord, shew me the way to the fountain-head.

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*Upon birds building their nests.*

63. *Med.* OBserving in the spring-time, when the fouls of heaven build their nests, how variously they did it, and every sort had a several way, fashion, mode, or manner which all of that sort, kinde or *species* did exactly observe, not by imitation but by a natural instinct, those that had never seen nest built before, were excellent artists, and needed no instruction: The several kindes also build in several places, as well as use several forms and methods; some build in houses in the chimneys thatch, and other places, others have places provided for them, as pigeons, stares, and such like; these are defended from winde, and weather, which others endure to their sorrow, but are less secure; some build in high and craggy rocks, in inaccessible places to defend their young; and some in lofty trees, as the oak, the ash, the Elme, the pine, and the cedars, far out of danger and dread; others that aspire not so high, hide their nests in rough hedges, bushes,

bushes, brambles, and obscure places, where the passengers eye shall not behold them, and generally all obscure them what they can from sight; yet some build upon the ground, as the *ostrich*, *which layeth her egges in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust, and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or the wilde beast may break them; she is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers, her labour is in vain, without fear, because God hath deprived her of wisdome, neither hath he imparted to her understanding, Job. 39. 14. &c.* every one acteth according to the wisdome God hath given them, to some more, to some less: I observed also the materials with which they built, and these were different also; some built with sticks, others with straws, some with moss, some with wooll, feathers, and many other things: the fashion also was various, some bigger, some less, according as need required; some built only a bottom, some railed up wals, some covered it over head to secure the young, some daubed their castle, and made it weather-proof, others not; various are the forms and fashions they use, and for ought I know no two *species* or kindes make their nests in every point alike; and in the working, both the male and the female, join heart and hand in the work, and use diligence till it be effected, and in sitting

ſitting on their eggs, both take their ſhare in the work, and relieve each other by courſes, as the careful obſervers teſtify, at leaſt of ſome kindes, and undauntedly endure the froſt and ſnow, the winde and the weather: as alſo in feeding their young, they have a mutual love and a mutual care, and take mutual pains; Methoughts this did much reſemble the love and amity, the care and induſtry between man and wife, and oh that there were ſo much between them as there is between theſe ſilly birds; they are faithfull each to other, and loving and helpfull, and that by a natural inſtinct without the uſe of reaſon, or any other bond or obligation; and thus it ſhould be, and oh that it were ſo between man and wife, they have more obligations each to other, God hath given them the uſe of reaſon, the Scriptures, and many other helps, yet many break all theſe bands aſunder, yea, the very marriage-knot by their adulteries, and neighing after other mens wives, and other womens husbands, and many times return hatred for love, and wiſh, if not practice the death one of another; they ſhould lend mutual help to build the neſt, and feed the young, but ſometimes both of them are wanting, oftentimes the one: there are many fooliſh men as well as fooliſh women, that *pluck down their houſe with their hands*, and

and turn off their children into the wide world, deſtitute and neglected; many ſpend that rioteouſly, that their yoak-fellows, or their parents have got painfully; and prove a hindrance and not a help to their relations; and as for the body, ſo much more for the ſoul, they prove ill husbands, and hindrances, and not helps in the way to heaven: God might ſend theſe men and theſe women to ſchool to theſe ſilly birds to learn faithfulneſs, love and mutual friendſhip, and aſſiſtance, as he doth the ſluggard to the ant, to learn diligence, and to the ſtork, the crane, and the ſwallow, to obſerve their times, and to the oxe and aſs, to learn to know their benefactour. Theſe poor creatures minded me alſo of the wiſe providence of God that hath thus inſtructed theſe otherwiſe ſilly creatures, *Job.* 39. 27. *doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her neſt on high?* intimating, it is at Gods command, it is he that gives goodly wings to the peacock, yea wings and feathers to the oſtrich, *Job.* 39. 13. and it is he that takes care of theſe birds, *Deut.* 22. 6. oh my ſoul, learn thoſe leſſons from theſe poor creatures, faithfulneſs, diligence, and care, learn thoſe relative duties here hinted out unto thee; fly idleneſs as the bane of vertue; let thy general and particular calling take up all thy time, eſpecially be a good

good husband for thy soul; oh my God, implant every grace in my soul to this end, out with every corruption, make me diligent for the world, but especially for heaven.

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*Upon a small bird feeding many young ones.*

64. *Med.* OBserving a little wren one of the smallest of birds that had a dozen young ones lying upon her hands to maintain, to take care of, and make provision for; I heedfully attended to see what the event would be; I observed with what unwearied pains she labours for their sustenance, how chearfully she imployed her little strength to that end, even to the neglect of her own belly, how self denyingly she behaves her self, sparing that which she should have fed upon to sustain them, and from morning till night busieth her self to feed them; but that which most put me to a stand was this, in her returns with meat they all stand with open mouth, to receive the new taken prey, which made me admire that such a silly creature, void of reason, was able to distinguish between those she had fed, and those she had not, which might in such a multitude have puzled a better head; I wondred that some of the

the moſt lively did not get all, and ſtarve the weaker, but that God hath put ſuch an inſtinct into them, thus to cheriſh their young, hath given them alſo ſo much knowledge as to fit them to do it: Having ſpent ſome time in this Obſervation unobſerved, I thought to try her affections to her young ones a little further, I approached the neſt as if I intended to rob her of her young, where I obſerved that poor creature naturally fearful and timerous, with what boldneſs, confidence, and undaunted courage ſhe oppoſed her ſelf to her ſmall power to have reſcued her young ones out of my hand, even to the hazard of her own life; this plainly diſcovered to me the divine providence of the great houſeholder that doth not only provide meat but alſo ſome one to give it in due ſeaſon, and to help thoſe that cannot help themſelves, and puts ſuch an inſtinct into ſuch poor deſpicable creatures, that they deny themſelves to help their young ones, and venture their lives for their ſafety, and never leave them till they are able to help themſelves, and then forſake them as if they knew them not, and that he gives ſuch a bleſſing to the labours of theſe two poor wretches, that ſuch a numerous brood ſhould be provided for, and no doubt brings the prey to them by his providence: this alſo may ſilence our Atheiſts, and may make

him

him lay his hand upon his mouth, for what accidentall concurring of atomes can occasion this, this made me also consider how degenerate a piece poor man is, many of them having obliterated what the most savage animals have retained, *viz.* this natural affection to their young, so that we may take up that complaint against many in our times, more deservedly then the Prophet doth against *Israel*, *Lam.* 4. 3. *even the sea monsters draw out their breasts, and give suck to their young ones, the daughter of my people is become cruel like the Ostriches in the wilderness*: these forsake their children through the extremity of famine, or for want of natural affection, *Rom.* 1. 31. there are many refuse to labour, to maintain their charge, the fouls of the air will rise up in judgment against these, yea, many waste and spend that riotously that is provided to their hands, when these poor creatures pinch their own bellies to feed their little ones; how many men and women endued with reason do so obliterate it, that they expose their children wilfully to want and penury, yea, to plain beggery, yea, when the very bruits seek what they can to preserve their young, and many venture their lives in their quarrel, and set themselves between them and danger, yet too many that bear the name of men and women, have so far obliterated those

thoſe principles nature hath imprinted in them, that they often lay violent hands upon their own children, and not only contrive their death, but alſo effect it; I would daily experience did not ſpeak out this truth too lowd, what aſſizes is there almoſt but ſome or other are tried for their lives upon this account? But though ſome have a care of their childrens bodies, there are but a few that make any proviſion for their ſouls, though that be their maſter piece, but ſuffer them to be eternally ruined: Oh the ſtupendious folly of the moſt of men, they train up their children as they do their horſes, teach them to drudge, and then they think they have given them ſufficient education; many if they can leave them an eſtate, though with a curſe intailed upon it, have their deſires; many are too tender of the body, that have little care of the ſoul, let that ſink or ſwim; but the time will come, that the ſoul will be found the choiſeſt jewel, and the loſs of that, the greateſt loſs: oh my ſoul be diligent in thy calling, make proviſion for thy relations, to thy power: *he that provides not for his family, hath denyed the faith, and is worſe then an infidel*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. be not without natural affections; but that is not enough, be not without ſpirituall affections: ſee that they have *mentem ſanam in corpore ſano*, though

the body muſt not be neglected, nor the things of the world ſlieghted, yet know, this is not the main; a little grace is worth a great deal of gold: keep a mean in earthly enjoyments, between coveteouſneſs & prodigality: fear not an extream in ſpirituals: oh my God, help me to regulate my life both to externals and internals, by the rule of thy word and ſpirit.

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*Upon the prating of a Parrat.*

65. *Med.* HEaring a Parrat talk and prate, and counterfeit mans voice, and utter words which yet he underſtood not; when I had conſidered of it, I thought it was a lively embleme of an hypocrite, for as this bird doth imitate man, and counterfeits his voice, ſo doth an hypocrite imitate a true Chriſtian, both in words and geſtures, ſpeaks as he ſpeaks, and acts as he acts, for what action or what duty can a Chriſtian perform, as to the external part of it, which an hypocrite cannot, doth not do? As there is no hearb in the garden, but there is ſome counterfeit of it in the field, which reſembles it, ſo there is no grace in the heart of a believer, but the devil hath its counterfeit, and therefore it is a cunning thing to be a Chriſtian, and an eaſy

thing

thing to be deceived: for what can a true Chriſtian do for the bulk, and materiality of duty, but a hypocrite can do alſo, yea, ſometimes ſeems to exceed him? and as in duty, ſo in conference and diſcourſe, it is hard to diſcern the one from the other; hypocriſy may be ſpun with a fine thred, and hardly diſcerned either in the cloath or colour from ſincerity, but it is often found out in the wearing to be but a cheat; in ſtorms and tempeſts it is apt to change colour, and will not hold out, but ſhrinks in the wetting: there is indeed a difference now both in garb and language, the one is truly beautiful, the other is but paint and varniſh, which time makes to fade: they ſpeak (it is true) the ſame things, but the one ſpeaks what he knows, and the other by hearſay: both may diſcourſe the deep myſteries of Religion, as the parrat may myſteryes of ſtate, if taught, but underſtand not what they ſay: Can a true Chriſtian diſcourſe of redemption, regeneration, converſion, adoption, ſanctification, *&c.* ſo can the other alſo, but the one ſpeaks what he feels, the other not: the Chriſtian findes the marks and tokens of it in his own ſoul, the other not: can the one diſcourſe of the workings of the ſpirit in the heart, of a believer, the actings of grace, of communion with God, *&c.* ſo can the other?

can the one ſpeak out his experiences of the goodneſs of God, the vanity of the creature, the bitterneſs of ſin, the comforts and directions of the ſpirit, the beauty of holineſs, *&c.* the other can counterfeit this alſo? but all this while, the hypocrites heart and tongue agree not: he diſclaims againſt that ſin which he loves, and pleads for the holineſs and integrity which he ſecretly hates, and abhors, and ſpeaks well of God and his laws, his ordinances and his people, which in his heart he abhors: The knowledge of the one, and the other differ, like that of a traveller, that hath been at *Rome* or *Venice*, or *Jeruſalem*, or *Conſtantinople*, and hath ſeen thoſe places, and known thoſe inhabitants, and dwelt among them, and his who hath only heard, or read of them, or ſpake with thoſe that have ſeen them; the latter perhaps may ſpeak as much, nay, more of the ſcituation of the place, the manners of the people, the government, cuſtomes, and laws they are ruled by, then the others can; yet is not their knowledge alike: the one is aſſured by ocular demonſtration, of what he ſpeaks, the other not; theſe eyes ſaw it, (ſaith one) theſe ears heard it, ſaith the other; ſo it is here, one ſpeaks what he knows, the other what he hears: Or it is like the difference between the knowledge of a diſeaſed perſon, and that of a phyſitian,

an, the latter can ſpeak more of the cauſes, ſigns and ſymptomes of the diſeaſe, and more learnedly deſcribe it, but the other feels what he ſaith, and knows the working of the diſeaſe in another manner of way then the phyſitian who hath only read of it, or heard of it from others: this is the difference of the knowledge between the ſincere Chriſtian and the hypocrite, the one ſpeaks knowingly, experimentally, feelingly, truly, the other ſpeaks by rote, like the parrat only, what is taught him diſſemblingly, hypocritically, and falſly, pretending to experience that they do not: oh my ſoul, take heed of contenting and ſatisfying thy ſelf with a bare notional knowledge, without experimental heart-knowledge, it is not that which floats in the brain, but that which ſinks down and ſeaſons the heart and life that will do thee good; the former a man may carry along with him to hell, yea, the devils have it in a greater meaſure then the moſt knowing man, though bad words may, yea, will condemn thee, if not repented of, yet good words (if any ſuch can be) without good actions, and good hearts, cannot ſave thee; yea, thou wilt be guilty of ſelf-condemnation in juſtifying what thou doſt not labour after; if godlineſs and a holy life be good, why doſt thou not live thus? if not, why doſt thou ſpeak thus?

why doth not thy heart and tongue agree? ſincerity is the true philoſophers ſtone, it turns all into gold, and makes weak performances acceptable: hypocriſy turns all into droſs: oh my God, grant me heart-knowledge as well as brain knowledge, leſt I go to hell with a candle in my hand: ſuch knowledge may ſerve to ſink me, not to ſave me; to talk of the way and not walk in it little profits; to ſpeak of heaven and not enjoy, will do me no good: Lord, let me be in ſubſtance what I am in ſhew; yea, Lord, make me ſuch as I ought to be in truth.

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*Upon a Kite kild by a Fowler eating his prey.*

66. *Med.* WHen I obſerved a kite, that bird of prey, how fiercely he ſtruck at a trembling partrich, carrying her away in her griping talons, rending her in pieces in an inſtant, when the poor innocent creature could make no reſiſtance, and none came to her reſcue, and devouring her yet alive, all reaking in her blood, and intombed her in his cruel devouring maw; Methought it was as bloudy a ſpectacle as ever I beheld, to ſee an innocent thus uſed, that had never injured him; but while I conſidered of the act, behold,

a fowler undiſcerned, ſhot him dead upon the place, in the height of his cruelty, with the meat in his mouth, ſo that he had ſowr ſauce to his ſweet meat: When I had a-while conſidered the matter, I thought I had ſeen ſome ſuch dealing in the world, yea, amongſt men, where one makes a prey upon another, and like the fiſhes in the ſea, the great ones ſwallow up the leſſer, and feeds upon them as theſe birds of prey do upon thoſe that cannot reſiſt them: The great ones of the world are like this kite; good for nothing, unprofitable burthens of the earth, feeding upon the brains of their innocent neighbours: how many cruel griping Landlords, wring ſo many tears from their Tenants eyes in their life time, that at their death they have not one more to ſhed? how unreaſonably do they rack their rents, and extort unreaſonable fines? how do they oppreſs them by unreaſonable impoſitions, ſervice, and other covenants, force them to do their work, keep their dogs, horſes, and ſuch like, when all this time they pay to the utmoſt farthing for what they have, that were it not for their liberty, it were as good for them live in *Turky* as where they do? they cark and care, and moil, and toil, and riſe early and ly down late, and eat the bread of carefulneſs: they fare hard, and work hard, and deny them-

ſelves even neceſſaries, yea, can ſcarce get cloathes for their backs, or meat for their bellies, but moil like ſlaves or horſes, and yet all too little to ſatisfy their greedy Landlord, who at length ſtrips them of all they have, ſeizeth upon their eſtates, turns them out of houſe and harbour, perhaps throws them into priſons where they end their miſery, while their families depend upon the courteſy of the pariſh: In their poverty the Landlord deals with them, as men do by their horſes, when one is tired they call for another, and ſhew them not ſo much favour as they do their dogs, for when they be wearied in their ſervice, they feed them, and make proviſion for them; Now all this cruelty is uſed to ſatisfy their inſatiable avarice, or to maintain their hawks and hounds, and whores, and other like debaucheries, and all too little: they ſuck their brains, drink their tears, and ſuck their bloud; and if their Tenants or poor neighbours are wronged by them, they may expect no more juſtice, then the fox and aſs in the fable, that were to divide the prey with the lion, they muſt give away their right for peace-ſake, part with all, and think they ſpeed well if they meet with no further miſchief; the laws themſelves prove often like cob-webs, they hold little flys but the great ones break through; But the time is coming that the

the fowler *death* will ſtrike theſe birds of prey to the heart, and long it will not be before it be done, and an impartial judge will make them vomit up the blood they have ſo greedily drunk, and pluck the prey from between their teeth, and make them know, that they were the ſole proprietors of what they enjoyed, but that he lent it for other ends then they employed it in; and now their condition will be worſe then their poor Tenants, and their accounts greater: remember the ſtory of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, both in their life, and in their death; oh how good is it for men to live ſo as not to be aſhamed to live, nor afraid to dye, and to keep a conſcience void of guilt that it cannot accuſe them of any unjuſt or uncivil act, leſt the ſergeant *death* put them into the devils hands, and they be caſt into priſon: theſe that will not now abate their fellow-ſervants a penny, ſhall themſelves pay the utmoſt farthing: he that will ſhew no mercy, ſhall finde none when they ſtand in need, and thoſe that now feed upon others, death ſhall ere long feed ſweetly on them, *Job.* 24. 20. yea, the never-dying worm ſhall feed upon them, as it is fabled, the vulture did upon *Prometheus* his liver: oh my ſoul, live ſo holily towards God, and ſo uprightly towards man, that thy greateſt enemies may have nothing to object againſt

gainſt thee but concerning the law of thy God: Improve thoſe talents God hath lent thee to his glory, leſt thou have the doom of the unfaithful ſervant: conſider, thou art but a ſteward of what thou enjoyeſt: and what is under thy hands, thou haſt but the diſpoſe of it, for thy maſters uſe, and he will require an account; take heed of getting any thing unjuſtly, keeping it unlawfully, or parting with it ſinfully; put not the poors part in any childes portion, this will be a canker to conſume the reſt, and bring a curſe upon thy poſterity: grinde not the faces of the poor, for their redeemer is mighty, and will not bear it; do as thou wouldſt be done by; ſhew mercy or thou wilt miſs of it when thou ſtandſt in need; if thou wilt not forgive others, God will not forgive thee: Oh my God, I have this ſin of cruelty in my nature alſo, oh curſe and blaſt this bitter root, that it may not ſpring up in me: incline my heart to lenity and mercy, yea, to forgive mine enemies, that I may reſemble thee my father, that doſt good both to the good and to the bad.

*Upon a kite ſoaring aloft, yet minding her prey.*

67. *Med.* OBſerving the Kite that bird of prey, ſoaring aloft, towring on high, as if he meant to ſcale the clouds, and look into heaven, and with the *Eagle to make his neſt among the ſtars*, *Obad.* 4. And yet I obſerved he ſuddenly deſcended, fell upon his prey, and devoured it; This obſervation ſatisfyed me, that though he aimed at heaven, and ſeemed to ſcorn theſe inferiour things, yet his eye and minde was fixed here below, and grovelled on the ground; though the bodv were above, the heart was below, and his mounting aloft was but diſſimulation, and upon deſigne, like the fox in the fable, that pretended himſelf dead, to take his prey the better; ſo this kite to compaſs his ends, carry on his deſignes, and to take his unwary prey, uſeth this ſtratagem: I thought this was a lively Embleme of an hypocrite, who ſeems to be all for heaven, when he mindes nothing leſs; he is only minding his prey, driving on ſome carnal deſigne, and when he ſeems to be trading for heaven, and diſcourſing with God himſelf, yet his heart and affections are glued to the world, and he is carrying on ſome ſelf-intereſt, or fleſhly deſigne; and is like a waterman, he looks

looks one way, and rows another : Thus the Pharisees those noted hypocrites did, for *under pretence of long prayers, they devoured widdows houses,* and fisht for popular applause with their prayers, fastings and almesdeeds *Mat. 6. 1, 2, 3, &c.* their hearts were on earth, when their hands and eyes were lifted up to heaven : A hypocrite is most devout, when preferment, profit or applause is in sight, but key-cold when there is no temptation ; they are burning hot in the publike, lukewarm in their familyes, and key-cold in their closets ; they are like a Cardinal I have read of, and doubtless there are many more of his minde, who being a poor fishermans son, was for his humility and other qualifications advanced to several degrees of honour, but always to minde him of his mean extraction, and to keep him humble, as he said, he would have his Fathers Net in his dining-room, that he might not forget his descent, but at the last being made Pope, the net was laid aside, being demanded the reason, he replyed, when the fish is caught what need is there of the net? This net and feigned humility was but to take the fish : and there are many in our times fish with such a bait ; some that depend upon some godly great man, or some religious Landlord, or great benefactor, counterfeit their colours,

and

and pretend to wear their livery, the better to ingratiate themſelves into their favour and friendſhip, but when they have caught the fiſh, the net is thrown aſide; for when they have attained their end, or are fruſtrated of their expectation, they ſoon caſt off the ſheeps-skin, and appear in their own likeneſs, they make religion but a ſtalking-horſe to take their prey, and uſe it for no other end, and when that work is done, they lay it aſide; they have a piece of work to do, and when one tool will not do it, they lay that aſide and take another; if profeſſion of religion fail them, they will turn perſecutors, and thoſe that now cry, *hail maſter*, will ſhortly cry, *crucify him*, they follow not Chriſt for love, but for loaves, and will be his ſervants ſo long, and no longer then they gain by him: *they put their hands to the plow, and look back*, and will have no more of religion then will do them good; while it will ſtand with their credit, profit, or worldly advantages they will be religious, when they muſt part with any thing, they will not buy heaven at ſo dear a rate; but let ſuch take heed of *mocking God, that will not be mocked*, or of playing with this candle, leſt they burn their wings, or approach too neer the ſun of righteouſneſs, leſt like *Icarus* they melt their waxen wings, and they deceive them: God can

eaſily

eaſily ſee through this thin vail of diſſimulation, and ſmell the filthy ſavour of an hypocrites rotten lungs ; this fire will ſoon diſcover this paint, and without oyl in the veſſel, as well as a lamp in the hand, there is no entring into the bridechamber : it is not then a *Lord, Lord, open to us*, will ſerve turn, yea, often this rotten inſide will rot the outſide alſo , and thoſe ulcers at the heart will break forth in the life and converſation : oh my ſoul, beware of hypocryſy, that damning ſin , that ruines thouſands , and ſends them to hell, and unfits a man for any office or imployment in Church or ſtate ; this will make thee hatefull both to God and man ; man will hate thee for thy profeſſion, God will hate thee for counterfeiting his colours, and ſerving the devil in his livery : if religion be bad , why wilt thou profeſs it ? if it be good , why wilt thou not practice it ? *Make the tree good, and his fruit good, or make the tree evill, and his fruit evill:* be as thou ſeemeſt or ſeem as thou art, and do not diſhonour God by a great profeſſion, and an evil converſation, there is no deceiving God by a fained ſhew, *who tryes the heart and ſearches the reins* ; he loves truth in the inward part, and the ſecreteſt thought of the heart cannot paſs by him undiſcovered ; ſincerity is the true philoſophers ſtone that turns all things into gold,

gold, and makes weak performances acceptable, when hypocryſy turns all into droſs, glorious performances into guilded abomination: oh my God, my heart is deceitfull, and deſperately wicked, a neſt of unclean birds rooſts there, and this ſin as well as others lurks in it; Lord, thou knoweſt my condition, diſcover my ſelf to my ſelf, and let not my own heart deceive me: *create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right ſpirit within me*: what good will a ſhew do without a ſubſtance, or a profeſſion without the practice; whatever thou denyeſt me, deny me not ſincerity: what ſhall I do at the wedding without a wedding-garment, or what good will a lamp do without oyl, or a talent, if not improved.

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*Upon a Bird in a cage.*

68. *Med.* UPon the obſervation of a bird in a cage, that was kept warm and ſecured from danger, fed to the full, and that without her care or pains, ſo that in my apprehenſion ſhe wanted nothing that might give content, or miniſter deſight; ſhe neither felt want nor wo; yet it ſeems ſhe was not content, with this ſuppoſed reſtraint or impriſonment, for in proceſs

ceſs of time ſhe gets looſe, fled away and refuſed to return, ſhe eſteemed her liberty more then all her enjoyments, and rather expoſed her ſelf to want and penury, yea, to danger and trouble, then to return to her eaſy confinement, and truſt her ſelf rather to the mercy of the mercileſs enemy, then to her greateſt benefactor: The thoughts of this raiſed my Meditation as high as our firſt parents *Adam* and *Eve* in paradice, they were placed in a place of pleaſure, provided for by God himſelf, wanted nothing for neceſſity or delight, and had only one little reſtraint laid upon them, to forbear the fruit of one tree, which haply had it not been forbidden, had not been deſired, but impatient of this reſtraint, they break the cage, and got looſe, and ſo were turned out into the wide world, and by this means brought want and miſery, danger and death upon all their poſterity, and expoſed themſelves and their off-ſpring to be a prey to the devouring vulture, ſatan: and this is the condition of their poſterity, they like not Gods cage, becauſe the devil promiſes more liberty, but brings them really into more ſlavery, they leave Gods ſervice which is perfect freedom for the devils drudgery, in hopes of more freedom, but really more ſlavery; they ſerve a worſe maſter, are ſet about worſe work, and ſhall receive worſe wages;

wages: loath they are to be under any reſtraint, and yet the devil keeps them in the moſt ſervile ſlavery: fain they would have their fill of ſin, and this will bring them in their fill of miſery; for ſuffering will follow ſin, as the ſhadow doth the ſubſtance; if ſin go before, miſery will follow after, and they will rue the time that ever they left their cage, changed their Maſter, or left his work: for when they come to receive their wages, they will be ſenſible of their folly; eternal deſtruction is the beſt wages the devil gives, but eternal life is Gods reward: But lets leave theſe doing their maſters work, and expecting his wages, and conſider man in his temporal concerns; and here alſo you will finde him a diſcontented creature, and though you follow him from the womb to the tomb, you will always finde him in a reſtleſs condition, never ſatisfied, never contented, in his infancy and childhood, never able to brook any cage, or endure any reſtraint, any thing but go to ſchool, and any book will pleaſe but that he is to learn in, any profeſſion but a ſcholler: in their youth any thing but ſervice or apprentiſhip, and any trade but what they are bound to, and any Maſter but their own; after any eſtate but a ſingle life, and when married they are ſoon weary of that: Many a ſervant that lived void

of cares, that ſleeps ſoundly, feeds heartily, and hath all neceſſaries provided for him plentifully, and nothing lies upon him but a little moderate labour, to do his work, and receive his wages, when ofttimes the maſter works as hard as he all day, and ſpends his ſpirits, and at night breaks his ſleep with anxious cares and fears, and turmoiling thoughts, how he ſhall pay his rents, diſcharge his debts, provide for his family, meat, drink and cloathes, and other neceſſaries, how he ſhall pay ſcot and lot as they ſay, and bring both ends together, and all proves too little many times, yea, a thouſand things more run in his minde and break his brain, yet this ſervant not content with this condition, diſlikes his cage, leaves it, he cannot away with any reſtraint, he muſt needs be his own man, or rather his own Maſter, ſtand upon his own legs, be ruled by his own will, leaves his ſervice, alters his condition, marries and ſets up for himſelf, and now he thinks all will be well; but after awhile, when pincht with want, and miſery, and forc't to maintain a wife and children, and much ado to get them bread, he begins to wiſh, oh that I were in my cage again, I ſhould prize it better then I have done, and begins to think his ſervice was better then his freedom, and wiſhes when it is too late

late that he had better conſidered it, and look't before he leapt: and thus it is with men in all callings, eſtates and degrees, always diſcontent, if any reſtraint be laid upon their inſatiable mindes. Oh my ſoul, chooſe not another Maſter till thou art ſure of a better, that will mend thy work, and better thy wages; this cannot be ſatan, his wages is eternal deſtruction, when the gift of God is eternal life; break not Gods priſon for the worlds liberty, now thou art liberally provided for, and remaineſt under the wings of the Almighty, and no devouring vulture can moleſt thee, but if at the inſtigation of Satan thou break thy cage, and make an eſcape, a thouſand dangers will aſſault thee, and thy poor ſoul will be made a prey to this *roaring lyon that ſeeks day and night to devour it*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. the devil that bloud-thirſty enemy will purſue thee to deſtruction, and nothing will ſatisfy him but thy ruine; oh my God, my ſtrength is in thee, and not in my ſelf, my enemies are many, politick and cunning, bloud-thirſty and cruel, treacherous and deceitfull, and my own heart like an inbred traitour ready to betray me into his hand; *I have no ſtrength againſt this enemy, only mine eyes are up to thee*: Lord, keep me under the ſhadow of thy wings, & let neither the temptations of ſatan, nor the frowns or ſmiles of the world draw me thence.

*Upon a bird with a clogg at her foot.*

69. *Med.* WHen I beheld a poor bird that was taken priſoner, and her Jaylor the better to ſecure his priſoner had hanged a little clog at her foot, I took notice how when ſhe endevoured to mount up, ſhe was always hindred and pluckt back again, and all her endeavours proved vain, as priſoners that are in for flagitious offences, have fetters, ſhackles, and great ſtore of irons clapt upon them to prevent their eſcape, and hinder their flight, ſo it fared with this poor bird; ſhe had a weight that ſhe could not lift, I perceived ſhe had a will to be gone, but power was wanting, ſhe was not content with her ſlavery, but how to remedy it ſhe knew not: endeavours were not wanting but a wiſhed ſucceſs ſucceeded not: I thought this much reſembled the ſtate of the poor ſoul by nature, who was taken priſoner by ſatan at the fall, and ever ſince kept under reſtraint, and the devil *leads her captive at his pleaſure*, and he hath to ſecure his priſoner, ſhackled and fettered her ever ſince, for fear of an eſcape, from which ſhe cannot free her ſelf, but remains ſtill under bondage; nay, the unregenerate man is ſo fettered and clog'd, and as it were lockt to a poſt, that he cannot

not ſtir, or ſo much as lift up his eyes or heart to heaven, and ſo infatuated withall, that he cannot heartily deſire his liberty, or pray for it, Satan hath put ſuch a force upon him that he is content to have his ear bored, and to ſerve him for ever, he is ſo acquainted with his ſervice that he thinks there is no better Maſter, nor no better work; he is like a bruit beaſt, ſtill grovelling upon the earth, and thinks there is no greater happineſs; he is like *Uliſſes* his men, fabled, by *Circes* charmes to be turned into ſwine, and being put to their choiſe, were content ſo to remain, and not aſſume their human ſhape again; ſo theſe are ſo bewitcht by Satan, that they are unwilling to be Gods free men, they know no other happineſs then to have their ſwill, and to wallow in the mire, and are angry with them that would help them out, they finde more pleaſure in their drinking and drabbing, then ever they did in praying and hearing; upon theſe we may write, *the Lord have mercy upon them*, for they have a plague-ſore running upon them, they are ſick to death, and yet feel nothing ailing them; there is but one phyſitian in the world can cure them, and that muſt be with a plaiſter of his blood: but we paſs by theſe as yet wholly at the devils command, and in his power: But there are another ſort of men, that have this clog at

the heel, and that is the regenerate, that have the skales of ignorance in ſome meaſure wiped from their eyes, and have a principle of life in them, yet are not free from this clog, though they are weary, and fain would be free, but cannot, and though their clog be lightned, and many of their ſhackles and bolts knockt off, yet cannot they mount up as they deſire, they cannot content themſelves with their earthly enjoyments, fain they would have a better portion, yet corruption hangs ſo faſt on, they have much ado to mount up to take a veiw of their heavenly manſion; they dare not eſpouſe their ſouls to any creature-comfort, and yet can maintain but little communion with their husband, Chriſt; if they do mount upon the wings of contemplation, and get a *Piſgah*-ſight of heaven, and a veiw of thoſe inviſible things at Gods right hand, yet how ſoon are they down again, and much ado to get a glimps of Chriſt: they are like a man that is looking at a ſtar through an Optick-glaſs, held with a palſey hand, it is but now and then they can get a ſight, their corruption therefore, that remains unmortified makes them cry out with the Apoſtle: *Rom.* 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* Oh my ſoul? is not this thy condition? how comes it otherwiſe

wiſe to paſs, that thou prayeſt ſo coldly, and heareſt ſo drowſily, praiſeſt God ſo faintly, and performeſt every duty ſo careleſly? is not heaven worth the having, and all the pains thou canſt beſtow about it? is not thy ſoul worth the ſaving, and eternity worth minding? canſt thou be zealous about trifles, and negligent in things of greateſt concernment? ſure there are heavy clogs lie upon thy heels, that thou runneſt no faſter: why art thou ſuch a ſtranger to divine Meditation? thou canſt think of the world without wearineſs, though it be from morning to night, why then are thy thoughts of heaven ſo few and forced? why art thou ſo ſoon tired in duty? ſo ſoon weary of ordinances, and ſo overly in them, that many times thou haſt ſcarce a glimps of Chriſt in a duty, and but little communion with him at beſt; why doſt thou feed upon the husks of duty, and content thy ſelf with the bare performance, though thou meet not with Chriſt in the duty? will this feed thee? will it make thee fat? how comes it to paſs ſo many vain thoughts, roving imaginations, impertinent wandrings are mixt with thy holieſt dutys, and moſt ſolemn ſervices? do not thoſe evidence to thy face, that corruption remains ſtrong in thee; and grace weak? and why contenteſt thou thy ſelf

with theſe fetters, and ſtriveſt not, prayeſt not more againſt them? Oh my God, when ſhall I be freed from theſe? when wilt thou knock off theſe bolts, and free me from theſe fetters, and *inlarge my feet, that I may run the ways of thy commandments*? then will my ſoul mount up to thee with chearfulneſs, then ſhall I ſerve God without wearineſs or diſtraction; oh fit me for my change, and then, *come Lord Jeſus, come quickly*: give me oyl in my veſſel, grace in my heart, and the wedding-garment of ſincerity for my ſoul, and then come at what hour thou pleaſeſt.

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*Upon birds obſerving their ſeaſons of coming and returning.*

70. *Med.* WHen I obſerved the cuckoe, the ſwallow, and many other ſorts of birds, how exactly they obſerved their ſeaſons, both in coming and returning, and all other birds in their building and breeding, how exact they were, and loſt not the opportunity, nor neglected the ſeaſon; It brought to my minde Gods complaint againſt *Iſrael* his own people, and thought how juſtly it might be charged againſt us, *Jer.* 8. 7. *The ſtork of the heaven knows her appointed time, the turtle, the crane, and*

*and the ſwallow, know the time of their coming, but my people know not the judgments of the Lord*; as if he ſhould ſay, theſe ſilly birds by a natural inſtinct, without the uſe of reaſon, know the times and ſeaſons of their going and returning, but my people that have greater helps and furtherances, yet take no notice of the ſeaſons of grace, and of the times of their viſitation: he complains likewiſe, *Eſay.* 1. 3. *the oxe knows his owner, and the aſs his maſters crib, but Iſrael doth not know, my people do not conſider*; and is not this *Englands* caſe? few conſider the time of their viſitation, or take notice of the footſteps of Gods departure: Chriſt alſo complains of ſuch, that could diſcern the face of the ſky, but could not diſcern the ſignes of the times, *Mat.* 16. 2. 3. as if he ſhould ſay, are you ſo weather-wiſe that you can foreſee the rain, and are you ſo ignorant of Scripture, that ye know not the time when the *Meſſiah* ſhould come? *Mat.* 23. 37. *oh Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, thou that killeſt the prophets, and ſtoneſt them that are ſent unto thee, how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not, Luk.* 19. 41, 42. *when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, ſaying, if thou hadſt known, even thou at leaſt, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thy eyes,*

*&c.*

&c. they had lived under the Ministery long, but no change was perceived: oh poor man, how art thou degenerated, even below the fowls of heaven, or the beasts of the earth; thou wast made a prince over the works of Gods hands, and all terrestrial creatures were subjected to thee, and now art sent to the oxe and ass to learn of them thy duty, and doth their understanding outreach thine? Most men are apt enough to take advantages for the world, they will not neglect seed-time, nor harvest, neither will they omit Fair or Market, that their occasions call them to, they suit their business to the season of the year; the Mariner observes both the winde and tide, and yet these very persons which the world calls good husbands, are very fools in reference to the soul, and let slip spiritual advantages; they provide not in summer for winter, in the day for the night, nor in this life for that which is to come; *Now the candle of the Lord shines upon our heads, and through his light we walk through darkness, the secret of the Lord is upon our pavilion, Job.* 29 3. the season of grace is yet continued, the harvest is not quite over, the market-day is not past, and we may lay in provision for the soul, and the means of grace is yet afforded us, but how soon winter may approach we know not; how soon the sun of the Gospel

Goſpel may ſet, *and night come*, we cannot tell, *when no man can work*; *the ſhadows of the evening are ſtretched out*, *Jer.* 6. 4. and the night ſeems to be approaching, and ere long our day will be over and never dawn again: there are ſad ſymptomes, that *the glory is departed from Iſrael*, and that God is going from us, *and wo to us if he depart*; *there are gray haires here and there upon us*, *and we perceive them not*, *Hoſ.* 7. 9. 'Tis our wiſdome to obſerve our ſeaſon, and ſtrike while the iron is hot, and make hay while the ſun ſhines, and work while we have the light, this is the ſeaſon of gathering honey with the bee, and getting oyl with the wiſe Virgins; the bridegroom is at hand, and will come in an hour we know not of, and at a time when we are not aware of, and only thoſe that are prepared will enter with him, and the door will be ſhut; then ſhall we wiſh, as Chriſt doth for *Jeruſalem*, that we had known the day of our viſitation, but it will be too late; The time of our viſitation is called, a day, for the ſhortneſs of it, and yet we are not ſure this day ſhall have twelve hours; many mens ſun ſets at noon, God may remove his candleſtick from us, as he did from the ſeven *Aſian* Churches, or his dwelling from us, as from *Shiloe*, *Jer.* 7. 12. and where are we then? *Go to my place in Shiloh where*

*I ſet my name at the firſt, and ſee what I did to it for the wickedneſs of my people Iſrael*: and may not he ſay thus of *England*? what aſſurance have we more then they of Gods continued preſence, if our ſins equal theirs? the abuſe of mercies, the contempt of the Ordinance, the abuſe of his Miniſters, and the making light of Chriſt himſelf, are crying ſins, and I fear we cannot waſh our hands from them; Oh my ſoul, obſerve the ſeaſons of grace afforded to thee by God, for whether thou improve them or no, they muſt be upon thine account: take the opportunityes put into thy hands, take time by the fore-lock, or thou wilt finde that it is bald behinde: improve every talent God hath lent thee, and let none ruſt by thee; cheriſh every motion of the ſpirit, and blow it up into a flame; this is thy ſeed-time, where thou muſt ſow what thou muſt reap in eternity, Gal. 6. 7. 8. *whatſoever a man ſoweth that ſhall he reap, he that ſoweth to the fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption; but he that ſoweth to the ſpirit ſhall of the ſpirit reap life everlaſting, and he that ſoweth ſparingly ſhall reap ſparingly*: this alſo is thy harveſt-time, lay in for winter, it is thy market-day, fetch in proviſion, it is thy *now or never*, neglect it not: oh my God, rouze up my dull and drowſy ſoul by ſome quickning conſiderations, and let me

me not ſleep away my time in ſecurity; rather ſpur me on by ſome affection, then ſuffer me to fall ſhort of my journeys end, let me live every day as if it were my laſt, and perform every duty as if I were preſently to give an account of it to God.

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*Upon a ſnail.*

71. *Med.* OBſerving a ſnail that ſluggiſh creature, how ſlow ſhe was in her motion, how ſloathfull her pace, how much time was ſpent, how little ground ſhe rid, and obſerving alſo that all the inſtigations I could uſe, rather hindred then furthered her journey, for when I prickt her forward, ſhe plucks in her horns, and ſtood ſtill, and no means I could uſe could make her mend her pace, this made me think this was a fit embleme of a ſluggard, as he is lively ſet forth by wiſe *Solomon* in his book of *Proverbs*, *the ſlothfull man* (ſaith he) *ſaith, there is a lion in the way, I ſhall be ſlain in the ſtreet, Pro.* 26. 13, 14. he forgets the roaring lion that prompts him to theſe ſilly excuſes; but never any came to hell that had not ſome excuſe for their coming thither; corrupt nature needs not be taught to tell her tail, ſin and ſhifting came into the world together; men hide their

their ſins from themſelves by falſe gloſſes, from others by idle excuſes, they would perſwade the world they have ſome reaſon to be mad, *as the door* ( ſaith *Solomon* ) *turns upon the hinges, ſo doth the ſluggard upon his bed*: abroad there is a lion, and at home there is a lusk that lives in the world to no purpoſe; *he hideth his hand in his boſome, and it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth*: and much more to this purpoſe, but of all other, the ſnail reſembleth the ſpiritual ſluggard, and the Lord knows there are many of them in our days, yea, which of us is not tainted with this diſeaſe? for hardly can we finde any men ſo ſluggiſh for the world, as moſt men are for heaven, or ſo careleſs for the body as they are for the ſoul, the moſt of us ſleep in harveſt, and are like to beg in winter; ſlug away the day, and make no proviſion for night, when they cannot work, and loſe the opportunity God affords them, and have a price put into their hands, but have no heart to get wiſdome; they provide not againſt the winter night of death, nor *the days of darkneſs which will be many*, *Eccl.* 11. 8. for as ſure as the night follows the day, ſo ſure a change will come, a ſtorm will riſe, and ſuch a ſtorm as will never be blown away to wicked worldlings: There is too many profeſſors go on in heavens way, as the proverb hath it, *on*

*a ſnails gallop*, we can ſcarce ſee them move; and many like the crab-fiſh rather go backward then forward, they are like thoſe *ſilly women mentioned, 2 Tim. 3. 7. ever learning and never come to the knowledge of the truth*; many have ſerved an apprentiſhip in Chriſtianity, ſome two, ſome three, and ſome more, and never yet underſtood the myſtery of their profeſſion, nay, not the grounds and fundamentals of Religion: thoſe that have been liſted ſouldiers twenty or thirty years have not yet learned to handle their arms, nor known the uſe of their weapons; thoſe that have been as long ſchollers in Chriſts ſchool yet have not learned the firſt leſſon, of ſelf denyal, they have the ſame corruption unmortifyed, the ſame grace weak or wanting; the ſame doubts unreſolved, and the ſame fears upon their ſpirits, as they had long ſince, many years are paſt away, and their work ſtands at a ſtay, no more fitter for death, no more aſſurance of heaven, no more communion with God, no more knowledge of the ſtate of their own ſouls, and all this notwithſtanding the means they have had, the Miniſtry they have enjoyed, and the ſeaſons of grace they have lived in; Now is not he a monſter in nature, that is as big at two years old as at twenty, and is it not a dullard indeed, that goes to ſchool twenty years,

years, and cannot take out one leſſon: Ancient profeſſors ſhould grow with the oak, more firmly rooted, and with the apple more ripe and mellow, theſe trees of righteouſneſs ſhould *bring forth fruit even to old age*, and add every year to their experience; indeed there are ſome that grow in opinions, and think this is growing in grace, and in few years run the whole circle of errors, and at laſt end where they began at profaneſs if not at athieſm, they grow moſt in the head, like children that have the rickets, when the reſt of the body pines; theſe errors, the brats of their own brain are like ſuckers in a tree, they draw all the ſap that ſhould feed the other branches to themſelves, and run up into aſpiring branches fruitleſs, yea, hurtfull; the ſtrength and vigor of the ſoul, the life and heat of their zeal, is ſpent upon theſe to maintain them, when the power of godlineſs languiſheth, but true grace grows uniformly, like a healthy body, though every member grows not to the ſame bigneſs, yet every member grows in proportion to the reſt, and ſo the body is compleated; but alaſs where is this growth of grace diſcerned? the moſt profeſſors are in a languiſhing condition, their pulſe beats weakly, and their natural heat abates, and they are inclining to a conſumption, or a lethargy: oh my ſoul, is not this thy condition

dition that is here deſcribed? art not thou fitly reſembled to this ſluggiſh creature? how long haſt thou been in Chriſts ſchool, and never the better? how many apprentiſhips haſt thou ſerved, and yet art a very dullard; and little more grace appears then did many years ago? well, double thy diligence, amend thy pace; ſet about thy work to purpoſe, leſt God turn thee out of his vineyard for a loiterer, and give thee thy portion with the unfaithfull, with the unprofitable ſervant, *Mat.* 25. 26. had idleneſs been a calling, doubtleſs thou hadſt been a good husband, yet at laſt up and be doing, thou canſt not ſerve a better Maſter, expect better work or wages; O my God, what ſhall I ſay to thee, or how ſhall I anſwer thee? mine iniquity hath found me out, and my ſin ſhews it ſelf, it is I that reſemble this ſnail, and have ſluggiſhly ſerved thee all my days: Lord, rouſe me up out of my ſecurity, that I may make more haſte, leſt I fall ſhort of my journeys end.

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*Upon a ſnail carrying her houſe along with her.*

72. *Med.* WHen I obſerved a ſnail carrying her houſe upon her back, and in ſo doing carryed all ſhe had

with her in her removes, it brought to my minde how the *Iſraelites* in the wilderneſs, when ever they journeyed, they removed their tents, and carryed them with them, and when ever they reſted there, they picht them, and carryed all their ſubſtance for forty years ſpace along with them, and this might well put them in minde that they were ſtrangers, and pilgrims, and there reſt was not here: I have read of heathen *Stilpo*, when the enemy had ſeazed upon all he had, burnt the town he lived in, and took his wife and children priſoners, being asked by *Demetrius*, what he had loſt? replyed, nothing, *omnia mea mecum porto*: I carry all-along with me, eſteeming his vertues his only riches, which none could take from him, but all loſeable riches he valued not; This made me further conſider, if any heathen could ſay thus, how much more a Chriſtian, that hath all his vertues adopted graces, and hath an intereſt in Chriſt, and a title to glory? for this is a Chriſtians *all*, and he can properly lay claim to no more; for as he hath all from God, ſo he hath all in God, and having God, he hath all, and a rich portion it is, beyond all the gold in the *Indies*, and all the wealth in the world; it is a more ſoul-ſatisfying portion then the world can afford, and ſuch a portion, that is durable, for the devil and

all

all his inſtruments cannot deprive them of it; and this they may take along with them to a priſon, to a gibbet, yea, to the utmoſt parts of the earth, if they are baniſhed thither: The men of the world would have their portion in the world and heaven, like paper and packthred into the bargain, but it will not be; they would carry the world upon their backs to heaven, but it is too great a burthen to carry up the hill, and too big to enter with at the ſtrait gate: The only way to make the beſt advantage of the world, is to take Chriſts counſel, *Luk. 16. 9. make your ſelves friends of the unrighteouſs mammon, that when they fail, they may receive you into everlaſting habitations*: this is the way to ſend the world before us to heaven, or to improve it to the beſt advantage; *teſtify your faith* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *by your works*; improve theſe talents well, and God will reward you for it, riches are not properly ours, but Gods; but if we make ſure the Jewel, we ſhall have the box; if we buy the wine, we ſhall have the cask; and if we *ſeek firſt the kingdom of heaven, and the righteouſneſs thereof, all other things ſhall be added, Mat. 6. 33.* moſt men begin at the wrong end, they make ſure the world, and think then, all is ſafe, and heaven ſure; but would they make heaven ſure, riches ſhould not be wanting: but moſt men think that ſcraping and

keeping together is the way to be rich, but the holy Ghoſt teacheth us, that it is giving and laying out is the way: *Solomon* tells us, *he that gives to the poor, lends to the Lord, and he will repay him*: *Pro.* 19. 17. *and he that gives to the poor ſhall not lack*, *Pro.* 28. 27. ſo that not getting but giving is the way to wealth; but *he ſhall have judgement without mercy, that will ſhew no mercy*: *Jam.* 2. 13. rich men are Gods ſtewards, he truſts them with his ſtore-houſe, to give their fellow-ſervants their meat in due ſeaſon, and *bleſſed is that ſervant whom his Lord when he comes ſhall finde ſo doing*, *Mat.* 24. 46. but if inſteed of feeding them, they feed themſelves, *and eat and drink with the drunken, and beat their fellow-ſervants, their Lord ſhall come when they are not aware, and ſhall give them their portion with hypocrites, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*: but all places are too full of ſuch evil ſervants, and ſo is hell too; ſuch duſt-heaps are found in every corner, but thoſe unmercifull men ſhall have their portion with the devil and the damned, *Mat.* 25. 34. when the charitable Chriſtian ſhall have a portion in glory; we are all Gods ſervants, and have ſome talents or other to improve in his ſervice to his glory, which if we do, we ſhall not be without our reward; *there is none* (ſaith God) *ſhuts the door of my houſe for nought, or kindles a fire upon my altar for nought*, *Mal.*

1. 10.

1. 10. he hath lent us our riches, and yet if we improve them and employ them as we ought, they will become our own, and we ſhall ſend them to heaven before us, where they will be made up into a crown for us; this is the only good they can do the ſoul, but whatſoever is not thus improved is loſt, yea, worſe then loſt; for it will be put upon our account, and required of us when we give an account of our ſtewardſhip: It is a great miſtake, and ſo it will be found, when men think they have an abſolute propriety in what they enjoy, and may diſpoſe of it at their pleaſure: Chriſt bids the young man, *ſell all that he had and give to the poor, and he ſhould have treaſure in heaven*, *Mat.* 19. 21. and rich men are charged *to be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to give, that they may lay up for themſelves a good foundation againſt the evil day*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. &c. had rich men but *Moſes* eye, to ſee the wealth of heaven, and the worth of it, it were not hard for them to make ſuch a choiſe as he did; worldlings if they could have heaven without labour or coſt, they would accept of it; if not, they will not buy it at ſo dear a rate; but Chriſtians ſay, *as Mephiboſheth, let Ziba take all, ſo I may enjoy the king*: oh my ſoul, here is riches worth labouring for, thou canſt not buy this gold at too dear a rate, the world

thou maiſt, and many do with the loſs of the ſoul: here thou canſt not be diſappointed, whatever rate thou ſetſt upon this treaſure, it is ten thouſand times better: lay hold upon this, make heaven ſure to thy ſelf, improve the world to a ſpiritual advantage, then will thy riches encreaſe as the oyl in the cruſe, or like the bread in Chriſts hands, or the water in a ſpring; thy good works will follow thee to heaven, when the world will leave her deareſt minions: oh my God, let it be ſo, ſay amen to my prayer, let me have thee, and I have all things neceſſary.

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*Upon mens miſery, labour, and pains.*

73. *Med.* WHen I conſidered that man that was the chief of Gods workmanſhip, and next to the angels the moſt glorious creature of the whole creation, yea, in his creation was made little lower then the angels, and *cloathed with honour and dignity*, *Pſal.* 8. 5. and was made Lord over the works of Gods hands, *Gen.* 1. 26. yea, God created him in his own image, all theſe inferiour creatures were made for his ſake, and for his uſe and ſervice; he was their little Lord, yea, the *angels themſelves are miniſtring ſpirits, ſent out for the good of thoſe that love God*, *Heb.* 1. 14. the ſaints are the Church, the

the ſpouſe, the bride the members of Chriſt, and ſo ſeem to be in nearer union to him then the angels themſelves; ſome think the devils envied this, and ſo fell from their own ſtation: thus you ſee, how man in the creation was exalted to honour: but on the other ſide, I conſidered, how man above all the reſt of the creatures was more ſubjected to miſery, labour, and ſlavery, yea, *vexation of ſpirit*, then any other, and many of them even worn out with carking cares, and fretting fears, with moiling, toyling, ſpending labour, which tires their bodies, breaks their ſleep in the night, when other creatures which were made for their uſe, and are their ſervants, reſt ſecure and free from daily cares and nightly troubles, many kindes of them are preſerved without their pain, all without their care, or fore-caſt; the maſters care for ſome, and maintain them, and God maintains the reſt; but it is not ſo with man; *he muſt eat his bread in the ſweat of his brows*, how true is that of *Job*, *chap.* 5. 7. *man is born to labour as the ſparks fly upwards, all things are full of labour* (ſaith *Solomon*) *Eccl.* 1. 8. moleſtation and miſery meet us at every turn, the world (ſaith one) is a ſea of glaſs, for it is vanity, mingled with fire, (for it is vexation), *Rev.* 4. 6. man is in a reſtleſs condition, toſſed to and fro like a football, and here he hath no reſting place; when I ſought

out the cause of this, why this noble creature should be thus subjected to trouble, and sorrow, more then any others; I quickly found out, it was Gods will and mans desert, for had man continued in his primitive purity, he had never had an aking head or aking heart, or loss or cross, or any thing to molest him; but when he had sin'd, God pronounced this sentence upon him, *in the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread*; which law never yet was reversed: The beasts of the field never transgrest their makers law, as man hath done, and therefore never had such punishment threatned as man had, though it is conceived they are sufferers for mans sin, *Rom.* 8. 20. had not sin gone before, trouble and misery had never followed; *the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life*; and as sin, brought death, so also sorrow into the world, what cause then hath poor man to hugg such a viper in his bosome, that feels so much the sad effects of it, which is the cause of all temporal, spiritual and eternal miseries, which without repentance will cause not only a seperation of the soul from the body, but also of the body and soul from God: I considered also, that though man were subjected to more care and trouble then other creatures were, yet if he did his work well, he was promised a greater reward, and

and better wages then any other, he ſhall be well paid for his pains, and who will not take pains for profit? it is fit that man that is promiſed a kingdome for one days work, ſhould work harder then he that hath but ordinary wages, yea, God hath gracious ends in theſe afflictions to his people, by this means he lets them know, their reſt is not here, and weans them from the love of the world which would undo them, who otherwiſe would with *Peter* ſay, *it is good being here*: we are travellers, and cannot expect reſt in a journey or ſecurity in an enemies countrey; the *Samaritans* would not entertain Chriſt, *becauſe his face was as though he would go to Jeruſalem*, *Luk.* 9. 53. and the world will not entertain Gods people, becauſe they have their faces heavenward: Chriſt tells us, *in the world we ſhall have tribulation*, *John.* 16. 33. this is not a paradice, but a purgatory to the ſaints; we may ſay of this, as one doth of the Straits of *Megellan*, when a man is there, which way ſoever he bends his courſe the winde will be againſt him; but Chriſt hath overcome the world, and will ſubject this enemy to us: It is a great miſtake to take this for our reſt, yet many do, and reſt here, and it is all the reſt they are like to have, and a miſerable portion it is to thoſe that have the moſt of it; there are none here

live

live free from miſery, though ſome ſinfully paſs away their time idly; ſorrow will follow ſin, as the ſhadow doth the ſubſtance; and if any can patch up a miſerable happineſs here, yet it is ſhort-lived, and they know not whether it will be a day older; when death comes eternal miſeries will take date: oh my ſoul, art thou under ſuffering, and haſt no free-day, do they come like waves of the ſea, one in the neck of another, thank thy ſelf and thy ſin for it; theſe are the fruits of thy beloved luſts; *when luſt hath conceived it bringeth forth ſin, and ſin when it is finiſhed bringeth forth death, Jam.* 1.15. never expect to be free from ſuffering, till thou be free from ſin; when thou ſmarteſt by affliction avenge thy ſelf on thy ſins, and make thy heart ſmart for ſin, if ſin be not forſaken, thy ſufferings will be more; God will make thee bend or break under his hand, but if thy ſins be hated and repented, deſpair not at thy troubles; it is but the portion of Gods own people: *Abel* began a health, and all the ſaints that ever were, are, or ſhall be, have pledg'd it round, and ſome have drunk very deep, and Chriſt himſelf drunk up the very dregs of it; but if thou ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, thou ſhalt be ſufficiently rewarded, yea, *thou maiſt rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great will be thy reward in heaven, Mat.* 5. 11. 12. Oh my God, thou haſt

haſt afflicted me leſs then I deſerve, help me to patience under thy hand, with correction give inſtruction, and let no twig of thy rod be in vain, fit my back for the burthen, and then lay on what thou pleaſeſt.

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*On the difference between a well manured, and neglected Orchard.*

74. *Med.* WHen I obſerved the difference between a well-manured, well-ordered, and well-husbanded orchard, and one that was ſlieghted, neglected, and careleſly heeded, I obſerved the difference between diligence and negligence in the one, I beheld the trees orderly ranked, not too near, nor at too great a diſtance, carefully prun'd, and freed from ſuperfluous branches, ſuckers clenſed from moſs, and other offenſive enemies, manured, dung'd, fenced from the violence of cattle, and in a word in a comely form, and handſome to behold, and the fruit anſwered expectation, and made amends for the care and coſt, but the other was neither handſome to the eye, nor profitable to the owner, lying open to the beaſts of the feild, out of order, and ſhape; ſome too thick, others too thin, overgrown with moſs, ſuckers, cankers, and unprofitable branches, the ground over-run with briars, brambles,

brambles, nettles, docks, and other unprofitable weeds, and the fruit thus choaked, and ſpoiled, proved accordingly; by this I ſaw the difference between a good husband and a bad: *Solomon* tells us, *the king himſelf is ſerved by the field*, *Eccl.* 5. 9. and ſo doubtleſs he is by the orchard, but then it muſt be well husbanded: *Uzziah* loved husbandry, 2 *Chr.* 26. 10. the orchard yields both meat and drink, both food and phyſick, profit and delight is here to be had, but not without labour and diligence: *In all labour* (ſaith *Solomon*) *there is profit*, *Pro* 14. 23. that is, all honeſt labour, *we ſhould work with our hands the thing that is good*; ſome labour diligently to do miſchief, and take pains to go to hell, there is ſmall profit in this work; and ſome (as one ſaith) do *magno conatu magnas nugas agere*, they do take great pains to ſmall purpoſe; ſome take as much pains to ſpend their eſtate, as others do to get it; and more pains in the way to hell, then others in the way to heaven; but diligence even in earthly buſineſs is doubtleſs a commanded duty, and negligence is a forbidden ſin, the one brings profit and the other loſs; diligence in an orchard brings in more then ordinary profit; the Apoſtle commands *thoſe that will not labour that they ſhall not eat*, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 10. paradice that was mans ſtore houſe, was his work houſe alſo; thoſe idle perſons that

have

have little to do, are usually set on a work by the devil, for he takes up and employs such wanderers; those that like body-lice, live upon other mens sweat, are not fit to live in a well-ordered common-wealth: it is an apostatical command, that *we labour with our hands, that we may be able to give to those that need, Eph.* 4. 28. he shall be poor (saith *Solomon*) *that dealeth with a slack hand, but the hand of the diligent maketh rich, Pro.* 10. 4. doing there must be, or the beggar will catch us by the back; it follows, *he that gathereth in summer is a wise son, but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame*; he that lets the offered opportunity slip, may haply never recover the loss; diligence usually (though not constantly) is attended with abundance; *but the sluggard shall be covered with rags*, we reade *Pro.* 24. 30. that *Solomon went by the field of the sluggard, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding, and it was grown over with thorns, thistles also had covered the face thereof, the stone-wall thereof was broken down; then I stood and considered it, I looked upon it and received instruction; yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep, so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man*, viz. unexpectedly, and irresistably; sloth and idleness is the nurse of beggery, the mother of misery, and the forerunner of ruine; *Solomon* makes some

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uſe of his obſervations, a bee can ſuck honey out of every flower and weed, but a fly cannot, and a ſpiritual minde can extract good out of every object, even out of other mens faults and follies, he can gather *grapes of thorns, and figs of thiſtles*, and extract good out of evil; This made me raiſe my meditations a little higher: I conſidered, if idleneſs be ſo great an hindrance to worldly advantages, what is it then to ſpirituall profits? if ground not manured brings forth briars and thorns, weeds and thiſtles, what will the ſoul bring forth, if it be neglected: this will ſoon abound with ſins, and vices, luſts and corruptions, and *Solomon* no doubt made this ſpirituall uſe of the miſcarriages of his fooliſh neighbour; a godly man (as I ſaid) will gather honey with the bee; where the waſp will not, the fly cannot, and the ſpider gathers poyſon; for a wicked mans example is often hurtful, but to none but the wiſe profitable: a wiſe man, with *Solomon*, will gather ſome good by others miſcarriages, and happy is he that other mens harms do make to beware: the ſoul is more ſubject to the weeds of ſin, then any field or garden can be to briars or thorns, or other noiſome things, and more diligence is required to keep it in order, and there is more danger in the neglect: briars and thorns are not more natural to the ground ſince the curſe

curſe, then ſin and corruption to the ſoul ſince the fall; and as in temporals ſo much more in ſpirituals; much diligence is required to keep things in order, and great is the advantage when it is done: oh my ſoul refuſe no pains, neglect no labour, heaven will make amends for all, ſtub up thy ſins by the root, and content not thy ſelf to lop off the branches, regulate thy affection, ſubdue thy headſtrong paſſions, bring under thy will, and make it ſubmit to Gods will; ſet a watch over thy heart, look well to thy words and thoughts as well as to thy actions, ſet a guard over thy ſences, thoſe cinque-ports, otherwiſe the enemy will enter; take heed of thy company, for ſeldome good is gotten by ill companions; beware of Satans temptations, and the worlds allurements, avoid all occaſions to ſin, nay, all appearances of evil, and know that for all the pains thou canſt take, thou ſhalt be rewarded, heaven will make thee amends, but the ſluggard is never like to come there; Oh my God, I have been this ſpiritual ſluggard, it is I have neglected my field and vineyard, and hence are all thoſe briars, and brambles ſprung up; Lord, help me to double my diligence, and amend my pace, *and ſo run that I may obtain, and ſo fight as to conquer.*

*Upon*

*Upon a great tree springing from a small kernel.*

75. *Med.* WHen I beheld some great fruit-trees, grown to a large stature, the persons being yet alive that set them, of small kernels, and that not very many years ago, and yet are come to be trees of very great bulk and bigness; the consideration whereof made me to contemplate the mighty power of God, that from such contemptible beginings could produce so large a body; and that of the small seeds of the cypress tree, such a huge bulk should so soon proceed, and that a slender akorn should bring forth so vast a tree as some oaks are, carrying so many tun of timber, and load of wood, as some do, this brought to my minde the parable of the mustard seed, *Mat.* 13. 31. where Christ tells us, though it be the least of seeds, that it grows up to a great tree, and that suddenly, that *the fowls of of heaven lodge in the branches of it*; for though in our northern climats, it arrive not to that bigness, yet travellers speak much of the greatness of it in those hotter Countreys; our Saviour Christs intention in this parable is to teach us, that as from this small seed proceeds a great tree, so is also the progress of the Gospel, which though at first it seems contemptible, yet it proves very efficatious,

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it is quick and powerfull, and wonderfull in operation, whither the fowls of heaven, the elect reſort, in proſperity for ſhadow, in adverſity for defence: In the promulgation of the Goſpel, from ſmall beginnings a few poor unlearned fiſhermen, the Goſpel was carryed as on eagles wings to the end of the earth, and in a ſhort time ſubdued potent princes, that ſet themſelves againſt it, to the admiration of all, thoſe angels came flying with the everlaſting goſpel; and in the reformation, how ſtrangely was it carryed on: *Wickliff*, *John Hus*. and *Jerome of Prague*, theſe paved a way and opened a door to *Luther*, who with a few more, withſtood the whole popiſh intereſt, and ſo prevailed againſt them, that thoſe *locuſts that came out of the bottomleſs pit*, were never able by their ſmoak to darken the light of the Goſpel again, but it brake forth more and more to the perfect day, even to all mens admiration: in many places it was carryed on againſt their princes conſent, yea, contrary to his will, in *Holland*, *France*, *Germany*, *Scotland*, and many more, ſo wonderfully did this little grain ſpread; and in this Nation by what unexpected means was the Reformation carryed on, by a prince which writ againſt it, and ſet himſelf againſt it, and yet was inſtrumental in Gods hand to carry on the work: God can make uſe of

whom he pleaſeth to do his work: Heathen *Cyrus* muſt be his ſervant to carry on his deſigne: in *Athanaſius* his time, how did God vindicate his truth by ſmall means againſt a world of *Arians*, and made him victorious againſt them all, *the word of God is powerfull, as a two edged ſword, to divide between the joints and the marrow*, Heb. 4. 12. By the growth of this muſtard-ſeed, is ſignifyed, not only the ſpreading abroad of the Goſpel in the firſt promulgation of it, but alſo of the growth of grace in a Chriſtians heart, which though it have a ſmall beginning, yet it encreaſeth wonderfully, *Job.* 8. 7. *the later end doth greatly encreaſe*; when the new creature grace is formed in the ſoul by the finger of God, it groweth like the childe in the womb, at the firſt it is an *Embrio*, imperfect, and unſhaped, but is perfected by the degrees, the heart, the brain, the liver, and vital parts, and in proceſs of time, the bones, ſinews, arteryes, nerves, and other parts, covered with fleſh, and skin, till it come to perfection, and when it is born an infant, it grows up to maturity, till it comes to a perfect man; when God ſpeaks a word ſecretly and ſuddenly to the heart, it ſticks cloſe, and never leaves till the work be done, and the new creature grace be formed, it makes a wonderful change in the man; it is like

*Elijahs*

*Elijahs* mantle when thrown upon *Elisha*, which made him leave his oxen and run after him, and desired only *to kiss his father and mother, and he would follow him*: the prophet said, *go back again, what have I done to thee?* 1 *Kin.* 19. 19. but he had done that which made him, that he would not forsake him, till he was taken up to heaven, and remained a prophet to his dying day; when God speaks home to the heart, the work is done, when Christ cals *Peter* and *Andrew*, *James* and *John*, they leave all to follow him, *Mat.* 4. 18. &c. with his word there went forth a secret power, inclining them to follow; the woman of *Samaria* left her pitcher, and *Mathew* his tole-book, and *Zacheus* his *Sicamore* tree, yea, half of his goods at Christs call, when God speaks to the heart, it sticks close, and never leaves till a through reformation be wrought, it turns a man from a lion to a lamb, and changes a persecuting *Saul* to a preaching *Paul*: *The smoaking flax shall not be quench't, nor the bruised reed shall not be broken, till he bring forth judgment into victory*; *Mat.* 12. 20. it is not the strong oaks only but the bruised reeds Christ cherisheth; *he despiseth not the day of small things*; the lest spark of fire may be cherished into a flame, and the least true grace will be growing, the very pantings after Christ, and unsatisfaction without him, are highly accounted of by

him; the earthquake made such an heart-quake in the *Jaylor*, that he cryes out; *what shall I do to be saved?* and the preaching of *Peter* to those that put Christ to death, reacht to their heart, and nothing would serve till they knew how they should be saved: so powerfull is the word when set on by God upon the heart: oh my soul, though the Church of God be brought low; despair not yet; it hath been so in former times, yet recovered, and Christ hath told thee, *the gates of hell shall never prevail against it*: God will yet say to *these dry bones*, *live*; and if thy graces be at an under, despair not; if it be true, though but as a grain of mustard seed, it will spring; if thou art but smoaking flax thou shalt not be quenched; if a bruised seed, thou shalt not be broken; oh my God, blow upon that spark thou hast given me, that it be not extinguished, remove the ashes of corruption that it may appear.

*Upon a crab-tree afterwards grafted.*

76. *Med.* OBserving one tree in the orchard wilde by nature, which though it had the same husbandry with the rest, dress, and pruned by the same hand, digged and dunged as the others were, though

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it grew in as fat a soil, and was refresht with the same sun, and watered with the same showers, yet still it brought forth sowr and unpleasant fruit; and neither art, nor labour could alter it, till I caused it to be grafted, and so changed the nature of it, and then the same means used made it answer our expectation; this made me to consider that this was the very reason why there was so much difference between persons that live under the same means of grace, under the same Ministry, enjoying the same Ordinances, sit in the same seat, live in the same house, yea, lie in the same bed, yet some bare good fruits, some bad, some sweet and some sowr, sure the fault is not in the means but in the men; I have read of *Melanchon*, that when he came to preach the gospel, he preacht with such convincing arguments, and so much Scripture light, that he was perswaded that he could have convinc't any man, but after long trial he found the contrary, and was fain to confess that the old devil was too cunning for young *Melanchon*: I have often wondred how drunkards, swearers, adulterers, or other debauch't sinners could sit under the powerfull means of grace, and have hell-fire flasht in their faces, and never startle at it, when both the Scripture and verse hath been quoted, where they were excluded heaven,

and yet they sit as unconcerned; but when I considered, *Paul may plant, and Apollo may water, but it is God that gives the encrease*, my wonder ceast: man can but speak to the ear, but God speaks to the heart, the same sun when it shines upon a garden of herbs, makes it smell more oderiferously, but when it shines upon a dunghill it maks it smell more fulsomly, the fault is not in the sun, but in the dunghill, the same sun softens wax, and hardens clay; when the sun shines, and the rain fals upon a fruitful pasture, it makes it more fruitfull, but when upon the heath in the desart, it is little the better; The reason why one bears good fruit, and another bad, under the same enjoyment, is, the one is ingrafted into Christ another not, but grows upon the stock of nature; all the watering, dunging, and manuring in the world will not make a thorn bring forth grapes, or a thistle figs, *Mat.* 7. 16. *A good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit, nor a bad tree good, so that the tree is known by his fruit; I am the vine*, (saith Christ) *and ye are the branches, he that abideth in me, and I in him, shall bring forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing*; *John.* 15. 5. A Christian that is grafted into Christ, is like the *Aegyptian* fig-tree, that is said to bear fruit seven times in the year, or like the lemmon tree, that ever and anon sendeth forth new lemmons:

When

When a man abides in the ſtock of nature, he can bring forth no ſavoury fruit to God; if the fountain be polluted, the ſtreams cannot be clear; if the heart be bad, the life cannot be good; if the lungs be infected, the breath will ſtink; of ſuch as theſe, God ſaith, *their vine is the vine of Sodom and of the field of Gomorrha, their grapes are grapes of gall and their cluſters are bitter, Deut.* 32. 32. *vitis non vinifera* (ſaith one) *ſed vene infera*: the vine is the evil nature, and the grapes are the wicked works; *they hatch cockatrice-eggs, and weave ſpiders webs, Iſa.* 59. 5. But when they are ingrafted in the true vine, they have ſap and nouriſhment from the root, then the buds of good deſires and the bloſſomes of good reſolutions ſpring forth, and after that the fruit of good works; other profeſſors are but like the Ivy that adheres to, and hath ſome ſhelter and ſupport from the oak, but they ſtand upon their own root, and bear their own fruit; unregenerate men are hammering out their own happineſs, and like the ſpider, are climbing by a thread of their own ſpinning; they live upon themſelves, trade for themſelves, and attribute all to themſelves, and have no higher end then themſelves; for water can aſcend no higher then the fountain head, but all this will fail them, for it is not Chriſt but a gracious ſoul, as it receives ſap and vi-

gour from Christ, so it bears fruit to Christ, and as it receives all from Christ, so it will draw out all for him, heart, and hand and tongue, and all shall be set a work for him; whatever they do or whatever they suffer, they can say, *propter te propter te Domine*, when others *sacrifice to their own nets, and burn incense to their drags, because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous*, *Hab.* 1. 16. a Christian crys out with the Church, *not unto us Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be the praise*: oh my soul, what fruit dost thou bear? is it good or bad, sweet or sowr, sound or rotten? hast thou thy nourishment from Christ, or from the stock of nature? *by their fruits* (saith Christ) *you shall know them*; and thus maist thou know thy self, whether thou be in the true, or the wilde vine: are thy grapes sweet or sowr? or art not thou barren after all this manuring? if thou be barren expect the sentence, *cut him down, why cumbers he the ground?* *Luk.* 13. 7. trees that are not for fruit are for fire; and if thy fruit be not good, thou maist expect the like doom, *Mat.* 3. 10. it must be good, *quoad fontem*, proceeding from the spirit of God, and *quoad finem*, as aiming at the glory of God: see what God intends to do with his vineyard, that he had hedged in, and manured, when it brought forth wilde grapes, *Isay.* 5. 2. &c. he resolved to make it

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a desolation; if thou bring not forth good fruit to maturity, it will not be long before he will lay down his basket, and take up his axe, thou wilt be condemned as well for not using, as for abusing thy talent; oh my God, am I implanted into Christ or no? I may well fear I am yet upon the stock of nature, I bear so little fruit, and so bad: Lord, ingraft me into Christ, if I be not; if I be, Lord, *purge me that I may bring forth more fruit.*

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*Upon the pruning of a tree.*

77. *Med.* WHen I observed some suckers in a fruit-bearing tree, which were not only fruitless themselves, but robbed the tree of her nourishment, and rendred it the less fruitful, for what should have fed the rest of the branches fed those luxuriant boughs, which shot up on high, and with an aspiring top, overlooked their more fruitful brethren, methought these resembled a sort of professors in our times that spend themselves in leaves and shews, and have proud aspiring thoughts of themselves, and overtop, and overtalk their fruitful brethren, and brow-beat them as if not fit for their society, and yet they are very barren of fruit, but are best at words, and

and ſhews: upon this obſervation I cauſed theſe boughs to be taken away, that the ſap might return to its old courſe, and found afterwards when the tree was cleanſed, and pruned from theſe, and other unprofitable boughs and branches flouriſh better, brought forth more and bigger fruit, this put me in minde that the great husbandman deals thus by his trees, *Joh.* 15, 1. 2. 3. &c. *I am the vine, my father is the husbandman, every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit*: ſome luxuriant branches, rotten boughs, raw grapes, muſt feel the knife, and thoſe that overſhadow the reſt, and yield them leſs fruitfull; ſome aſpiring branches he takes away, the gumm of pride, and the moſs of formality (ſaith one) but dreſſes, ſupports, ſhelters, and ſecures thoſe that bear fruit: hypocrites are here ſaid to be in Chriſt, by profeſſion, or in their own judgment, or the judgment of charity, when they rather adhere to him, then inhere in him, for thoſe that are really in him ſhall never be cut off, *of all thoſe that his father hath given him, he will not loſe one, my father* (ſaith he) *is ſtronger then all, and none can pluck them out of my fathers hands*; but there are ſome, as I ſaid before, that only adhere to Chriſt, as the Ivy to the oak, but ſtand upon their own legs, grow upon their own

root,

root, and bear their own fruit, and only ſeek ſupport and ſhelter here, theſe ſhall be taken away, and they may without deformity, they only adhere to him as a wooden leg cleaves to the body, but is no part of it, receives neither life nor heat nor influence from the head, or heart; they are like a pole faſtned in the earth but is not rooted, or like a wen or ulcer or other excreſſion that may be taken away without loſs, but as in fruit-bearing trees there is need of clenſing from moſs, cankers and other hindrances, and incumbrances, ſo the beſt Chriſtians as well as the beſt ſociety, had need of the pruning-hook, yea of purging, bleeding, cutting, that they may bring forth more fruit; there are in the beſt many warts, or wens, or deformed ulcers, that may be taken away without dammage, and the cauſes removed; Chriſts vines muſt be trimmed, dreſſed, clenſed, and ſupported; nothing requires more ſupporting, more cutting then a vine, that the ſap nouriſh not ſuperfluous branches and leaves, and tis better bleed then burn, and be cut then wither; God will have nothing ſhade or hinder his fruit: we ſee by this the benefit of affliction, and that there is no cauſe to quarrel God, if he do let us bloud, or take away the cauſe of ſome excreſcence; all his pruning, dreſſing, cutting is little enough, and ſometimes all will not do: ſo

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it in his own vineyard, *Isay.* 5. 1, 2. &c. *what could I have done more for my vineyard that I have not done, yet when I looked for grapes behold wilde grapes,* and thereupon he threatens to take away the fence, & lay them waste, and break down the wall that it may be troden down, and lay it waste that it shall neither be pruned nor digged, but may bear briars and thorns, and that he will command the clouds that they shall not rain any more upon it; now this vineyard is there said to be the house of *Israel,* and *Judah was his pleasant plant*: I wish *England* that God hath so long watered and manured, ly not under this severe threatning, God hath done much for his vineyard, and many vine-dressers he hath sent amongst them, and many an unprofitable branch hath he cut off, and yet great need there is of pruning still, I know not that any nation under heaven, hath been better manured, nor any nation that hath brought forth worse fruit, yet hath God at the intreatance of his vine-dressers, forborn to cut them down, and oh how happy are that people that have such to intercede for them, but God will not always be intreated, his patience will be outworn, they may provoke him so long till there will be no remedy, there is a time when he will not hear, yea, that he will say, *pray not for this people* for they are ripe for judgements,

ments, then will he lay down his basket, and take up his axe and say, *his spirit shall not always strive with man, Shiloe* was his house, but he forsook it, the *temple of Jerusalem* was his habitation but he left it, *Judah* was his pleasant plant, but he hath forsaken it; he did walk among the seven golden candlesticks in the Churches of *Asia*, but he hath removed those candlesticks, and the Lord grant he may never give *England* a bill of divorce; oh my soul, art thou a barren branch, then maist thou fear the pruning-hook, if thou be a barren tree thou maist fear the axe, and the fire is like to be thy end; if thou bear but a little fruit, if God spare thee thou maist expect cutting and pruning by affliction; it is better bleed then burn, answer Gods ends in his afflicting thee, bring forth more fruit, if he take any thing from thee 'tis but what thou canst well spare, yea what feed some excrescence, and rendred thee more useless: oh my God, use me as thou wilt, only cut me not down for the fire; cut me and prune me at thy pleasure, but forsake me not, nor lay me waste.

*Upon ſuckers in a fruit-bearing tree.*

78. *Med.* FRom thoſe ſuckers before obſerved in a fruit-bearing tree, I had alſo this following meditation, for obſerving how they grew rank by the nouriſhment that ſhould have fed the tree, and lofrily lift up the head above them, and ſuckt that ſap that ſhould have made other branches to bear; and as they were unprofitable themſelves, ſo they rendred the reſt almoſt uſeleſs; I thought they much reſembled ſome new upſtart opinions which ſome unwary profeſſors eſpouſe to themſelves, and becauſe they differ from others, they therefore think themſelves more holy then their neighbours, and hold their heads higher, and verily believe growing in opinion, is growing in grace: In *Arragon* there were ſome hereticks who called themſelves the *illuminati*, as if they only had been in the light, and all the world beſides had been in darkneſs, the *Gnoſticks* would be the only knowing men, the *Manichees* thought whatſoever they taught was food from heaven, and the *Family of Love* boaſt of their *Evangelium regni*, and of late the *Ranters* and *Quakers* boaſt of the infallible conduct of the ſpirit; Now thoſe opinions are ofttimes the brats of their own brain, and many times pernicious errours

rours, or at leaſt unprofitable things ; or matters of no great concernment, yet they being thus eſpouſed they ſuffer theſe opinions to ſuck all the ſap that ſhould maintain the vitalls of Religion, that the whole tree is thereby rendred uſeleſs and unprofitable ; How many are there in our age that might have brought God much glory, and his Church much good, who have ſet themſelves with might and main, and ſpent their time, and their ſtrength, and laid out their zeal, and all for the promoting their own opinion, perhaps an errour, or at beſt but ſome leſſer diſputable truth ; perhaps about ſome circumſtance of worſhip, when in the mean time the very fundamentals of religion are neglected, and the very vitals languiſh for want of nouriſhment, for ſeldome do you ſee a wrangling Chriſtian eminent in the power of godlineſs ; Many men when they have eſpouſed an opinion, make proviſion to maintain it, they ſubject not their opinions to the rule, but bring the rule to them, and make it truckle under them, for it is victory and not truth that many ſeek, and therefore they ſpend their time and ſtrength this way, yea, ſhut their eyes againſt all that makes not for them ; they are as zealous for their opinion, as if the whole of religion conſiſted in it, and as if they could hardly be Chriſtians which were

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not of their minde, when perhaps for ſixteen hundred years they cannot finde a man of their judgement, and all this while forgetting, that the power of godlineſs, and an holy life is the main of religion; for whatever is in the brain, if this be not in the heart, all is worth nothing; theſe mens knowledge floating in the brain, makes them top-heavy, but by reaſon of ſome obſtructions, their knowledge ſinks not down into, nor ſeaſons the heart, or the life: Many are like the two men in the fable, that contended about the ſhadow of the aſs they had found, who ſhould go in it in a hot day, till at laſt while they contended, the aſs got looſe, and eſcaped; or like the dog in the fable, that catching at the ſhadow loſt the ſubſtance; ſo theſe contend about trifles, and neglect the main; they are like children that have the rickets, the head grows too big for the body, the head thrives but the whole body pines; they ſpend ſo much of their ſtrength and zeal for externals, that they neglect the internals; they have ſo much zeal for, or againſt ceremonies, that they neglect the ſubſtance; yet miſtake me not, my deſigne is not to make men careleſs in leſſer points, but more carefull in greater: I would not have them think any ſin ſmall, or to neglect any known duty, but I would have them proportion their

zeal

zeal according to the weight of the matter, and not ſpend it all upon leſſer matters, and neglect the main concerns: I would have no man neglect his little finger, yet would I have him in the firſt place ſecure his head, and heart; he may be a man, if he want his little finger, but not without his head and his heart; he may be a Chriſtian though he erre about the modes and circumſtances of worſhip, but he cannot without holineſs and ſincerity: ſome Chriſtians are like the *Salamander* always in the fire of contention, but theſe mens graces rather then corruptions are like to be burnt: I like not thoſe men that moddle religion in their own brain, and make their own conceptions the center of unity; and like *Procruſtes* make his own bed fit all comers; *Let all things* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *be done decently and in order*, 1 *Cor.* 14.40. a neceſſary rule, but ſo extremely wrackt, that I conceive through mens corruption, it hath produced more indecency and diſorder then any one Scripture beſides; the Papiſts and others making this the foundation of all their needleſs ceremonies: but to return to the point in hand, my deſire and deſigne is to perſwade men to maintain the vitalls of Religion, in the firſt place, and let the ſtrength of their zeal be laid out here, and for leſſer points, if diſputable, let every man be ſatisfied in his own con-

ſcience, and grant ſome allowance to others that differ in their judgements, till they themſelves are infallibly ſure that they hold no errors: take Chriſts counſel, *Mat.* 7. 1. *judge not that you be not judged, for with what judgement ye judge, ye ſhall be judged, and with what meaſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you again*: many men are quick-ſighted abroad, but blinde at home; reade alſo the Apoſtles counſel, *Rom.* 14. 1, 2, 3. &c. Oh my ſoul, ſpend not thy time and ſtrength in trifles, when thou haſt other work to do, let thy greateſt zeal be laid out on matters of greateſt concernment, maintain the vitalls of religion, and that will maintain thee; do not doat upon the brats of thy own brain, neither cenſure thoſe that differ from thee in cicumſtantials; love Chriſt whereever thou ſee him, though in one of another judgement; Lord, make me upright in the main, and to employ and improve all my ſtrength for thee.

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*Upon a fair but fruitleſs tree.*

79. *Med.* WHen I ſaw a fair and large ſpreading tree, that overtopt, and overlookt all the reſt, that had a flouriſhing head, and a promiſing ſhew, and gave great hopes of fruit to all the beholders, but

but drawing near, as Chriſt did to the leavy fig-tree, *Mat.* 21. 19. expecting fruit, I found none; his whole ſtrength was ſpent in bringing forth leaves, when others that were leſs promiſing were richly laden with fruit: ſo apt are we to miſtake, if we judge at a diſtance; When I had ſeriouſly conſidered it, I thought this tree did fitly reſemble ſome high-flown profeſſor that makes a great ſhew in the world, and ſeems like *Saul* higher by the head then others are, and haply diſdains them, as not fit for their ſociety; for oftentimes hypocrites do ſo by their poor brethren called weak Chriſtians: Theſe you may frequently hear commending their own attainments and their own enjoyments, their knowledge gifts, and their communion with God, and ſpeaking of their holy raptures, their aſſurance, and ſuch like; and think they are not Chriſtians that have not indubitable evidence of their ſalvation, when others ly under the hatches, under fears and doubts, complaining under the ſence of their ſin, the hardneſs of their hearts, under their wants and other ſpiritual diſtempers, the load of corruption that lyes upon them, their want of communion with God, and fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt, the want of aſſurance, and ſuch like; having the ſun of righteouſneſs often clouded and hid from their

ſight: but when I have come a little nearer to them, and more heedfully obſerved their courſe of life, I ſaw that many of theſe great confidents, bear little more then leaves, and that where there was ſo much of the tongue, there ſeemed to be but little of the heart, and their religious duties, eſpecially in their family were cold enough, and anſwered not to their confident braggs; That thoſe doubting Chriſtians were more conſtant and ſpiritual in their performances; That their lives and converſations were more holy towards God, and more righteous towards men, then the others were, who bare more leaves, but leſs fruit: Upon this Obſervation, I thought theſe fitly reſembled the Phariſee and the Publican, *Luk.* 18. 9. &c. the one brags of his worth, the other is aſhamed of his duties; the one comes with confidence into Gods preſence, but the other with fear, but Chriſt tells us, that the Publican was the better man, and better welcome; all is not gold that gliſters; hypocriſy may lodge in a ſelf-confident breaſt, and ſincerity under a thred-bare coat, amidſt many doubtings; neither is it always ſafe to judge of a mans integrity by his tongue, a confident bragger is not always to be believed, the emptieſt barrel, makes the greateſt ſound, and the worſt ſpoak in the cart we ſay creaks firſt: It is the aſpiring ear

of

of corn that is moſt like to be blaſted, when thoſe that hang the head are uſually moſt fruitful, it is the humble ſelf-denying Chriſtian that bears moſt fruit to God, and is likelieſt to be moſt uſefull in his generation; *God dwells in the high and holy heavens, with him alſo that is of a contrite heart, to revive the ſpirit of the humble*: A hypocrite holds himſelf to be the whole piece, and all others but a remnant; he takes his poor counter, and ſets it down for a thouſand pound; he prizeth himſelf above the market, but he reckons without his hoſt, and therefore muſt reckon twice; the ſeed of grace ſeldom proſpers upon mountain-tops, and high-grounds, but in low valleys, upon the ſtalk of ſelf-denyal: The more fruit is upon any tree, the more it inclines to the earth; and the more upright and aſpiring, the more barren; it is the valley and not the tops of mountains that bring forth the beſt corn and graſs, and other fruits; The greateſt braggers are not always the richeſt, wiſeſt, or the moſt learned men; many high flown profeſſors are like the *nightingale* (as one ſaith) *vox & præterea nihil*, and thoſe that have leaſt, ſpeak oftentimes loudeſt; but it is not the beſt man that hath the beſt lungs, but the beſt heart; the ſtrongeſt Chriſtian is moſt ſenſible of his own wants and weakneſſes, as the wiſeſt Philo-

ſopher could ſay, *I know nothing but that I know nothing*, but the bragadocia diſcovers his own ignorance; where the river runs quietly, the ford is deepeſt; but where it makes moſt noiſe, it is moſt ſhallow; I dare not then prefer an over-confident bragger before an humble Chriſtian; I had rather judge by their life then by their language; there are many that talk like Chriſtians, but I love to ſee men walk like Chriſtians; a parat may learn humane language, but not humane action; when the actions are ſo diſſonant to the words, I cannot think the heart and tongue agrees: oh my ſoul, rather be good then ſeem ſo, rather bear fruit then leaves; for it is fruit and not leaves, ſubſtance and not a ſhadow, thy Lord expects: it is good works as well as good words, intentions as well as pretences he requires; let another praiſe thee and not thy own mouth; a ſtranger and not thy own lips, *Pro.* 27. 2. let a man do worthyly in *Ephrata*, and he will be famous in *Bethelem*; he need not be his own trumpeter: honour followeth vertue, as the ſhadow doth the ſubſtance; *thoſe that honour God, God will honour, but thoſe that deſpiſe him, ſhall be lightly eſteemed*: ſet the crown upon Gods head, and he will ſet the garland upon thine; let thy own works, but not thy own words praiſe thee, *Pro.* 31. 31. do well

and

and thou needſt not with *Jehu* proclaim thy own praiſes; if thy converſation give light, doubtleſs it will not be hid: Oh my God, let me ſtand approved in thy ſight, and I matter not what man ſaith of me: give me truth in the inward parts, make me ſound at the heart, give me ſincerity, and I ſhall then bear thee fruit.

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*Upon a great tree ſpoiling others under it.*

80. *Med.* WHen I conſidered the fore-mentioned tree, that made ſuch a pompous and promiſing ſhew, and was grown top-heavy, and yet fruitleſs and worthleſs, when many ſmaller ſhrubs yielded a plentiful encreaſe: I conſidered it further, and obſerved this was not all, for I plainly ſaw that it was an enemy to all that grew near it, and none proſpered about it; for in overſhaddowing them or dropping upon them, it rendred all that were within the reach of it either barren or at leaſt not ſo fruitful, as thoſe that grew at a greater diſtance: This Obſervation helpt me to the following Meditation: I thought this tree did much reſemble many great men, which make a pompous ſhew, and make a great coil, and keep a great ſtir, and buſtle in the world, and yet bear little or no good fruit,

but it is bitter, ſowr or unſavory; they ſpread abroad their branches far wide, fill a countrey, have many under them, that might bear much fruit, but they drop ſuch a poyſonful influence upon them, that they neither bear no fruit, or worſe then none, bad fruit; for they can ſeldome proſper, or bring any good fruit to maturity, neither is there any good tree or flower can live near them; we may ſay of them, and commonly of thoſe that live under them, as God doth of the like, *Deu.* 32. 32. &c. *their vine is the vine of* Sodom, *and of the fields of* Gomorrha; *their grapes are grapes of gall, and their cluſters are bitter, their wine is the poyſon of Dragons, and the cruel venom of aſps*: for what can you obſerve from many great ones, and thoſe that depend upon them, but ſwearing, drinking, gluttony, adultery, Sabbath-breaking, oppreſſing, perſecuting, and an enmity of the power of godlineſs, and there ſhall not a godly man live under them, nor within their reach, if they can help it, and they do ſo poyſon all about them, that the very earth it ſelf is curſed for their ſakes, and by their means toads and ſerpents, brambles and briars, thoſe fruits of the curſe, can only proſper near them, and harbour under their ſhadow; and yet alaſs, ſtill they are but men, though great men, and ſignify no more then men, and like men they ſhall die, and death

death will level them with the meaneſt of men: great men are indeed like capital Letters, they bear a great bulk, and poſſeſs a great room, and have a more pompous dreſs, and people are apt more to look upon them, and children to admire them, and yet in ſignification they are but the ſame with the reſt, and the other have the ſame ſound, though theſe commonly have the precedence and leading, yet they are but letters, and ſo are the reſt, and ſtript out of their dreſs are called by the ſame name; theſe are but letters, and great ones are but men, they are indeed like the fore-man on the Jury, they have liberty to ſpeak firſt, but their vote is but a vote, they make a great buſtle in the world for a time, and act ſome great mans part, but when the play is done, and they are diſrobed, alaſs, it is but poor man ſtill, and when the Lord of the vineyard comes and findes them barren, he never regards their bulk or beauty, but bids, *cut them down, why cumber they the ground? Luk.* 13. 7. 9: thoſe that are not for fruit are for the fire; the herb of grace cannot grow near them, nor within their reach, they caſt forth a poyſonfull influence round about, a godly man cannot live by them, but he is poyſoned by them, or by perſecution driven from them, but *their damnation ſleepeth not*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. I know ſome great trees are good

trees

trees, trees of righteouſneſs that bear abundantly, and theſe are to be prized, theſe are a ſhelter, *a ſhelter from the ſtorm*, and to theſe the godly fly for refuge; ſuch was *David*, *Joſiah*, *Hezekiah*, and ſeveral others; *Abraham*, *Job*, and good *Obadiah*, but theſe are like black ſwans, ſeldome ſeen, yet ſome ſuch we have in our days: the moſt of our great ones bear poyſonous fruit, that infects thoſe that taſte of it, ſome more moderate bear only leaves, and it is well they bear no worſe; a bare fruitleſs profeſſion they make, but as they do no good, ſo they do little hurt; ſome bear a little fruit, and a little makes a great ſhew in a great perſon, but the moſt bear none or worſe then none, but prove like a blazing ſtar, and threaten ruine to the beholders: thoſe that have moſt, oftentimes do leaſt, but it is pitty Gods good gifts ſhould be thus abuſed, an account of thoſe talents ſhall one day be required; as the Phariſees had their learning hanged in their light, *which of the Scribes and Phariſees have believed on him? Joh.* 7. 48. *ſapientes ſapienter in infernum deſcendunt*: there are none ſo deep in hell as knowing men; ſo rich men have too great a clog at their heels *to run the ways of Gods commandements*; Chriſt tells us how hard a thing it is to be great and good, for *it is eaſier* (ſaith he) *for a Camel to go through a needles eye, then for a rich man to enter*

*enter heaven*, *Mat.* 19. 24. *Shimei* ſeeking his ſervant loſt himſelf, and moſt men ſeeking riches, pleaſures, and honours which ſhould be their ſervants, loſe their ſouls: Let ſuch reade that flaming text, *James* 5. 1, 2. &c. *go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for the miſery that ſhall come upon you, your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moath-eaten; your gold and your ſilver is cankred, and the ruſt of them ſhall be a witneſs againſt you, and ſhall eat your fleſh as it were fire: ye have heaped treaſure together for the laſt day: ye have lived in pleaſure on the earth, and been wanton, ye have nouriſhed your hearts as in a day of ſlaughter, ye have condemned and killed the juſt, and he could not reſiſt you*: did men but conſider the temptation that riches expoſes them to, and the dangerous events that often follow, they would not ſo eagerly purſue them, nor ſo greedily gape after them; oh my ſoul, bleſs God thou art freed in a good meaſure from thoſe temptations that many others lie under, and think thy own condition beſt; hadſt thou enjoyed more, it might have been thy portion, hadſt thou had ſtronger temptation and more baits, thou mighteſt have ſwallowed the hook as others have done, thou haſt leſs to anſwer for: oh my God, give me *neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient, give me food and rayment, and let me be content*, but let not theſe things be my portion.

*Upon*

*Upon an old, yet fruitful tree.*

81. *Med.* WHen I saw an old tree that promised little yet was richly laden, and had not only more fruit, then those that were younger, and made a greater shew, but the fruit was better also, it exceeded not only in quantity but also in quality, the other trees; this Observation made me think this tree resembled much an old Christian, an ancient professor, that usually bears more and better fruit then the younger sort, their judgements being ripened and mellowed by their experiences, and usually they are not so tart and sowr, so sensorious and self-wilde, as the younger are, who are apt to condemn all that are not just of their judgements, though otherwise they hold forth as much of Christ and a Gospel conversation as they do themselves; This Consideration brought to my minde what the Psalmist saith of such, 92. *Psal.* 12, 13, 14. *the righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, he shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon, those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God, they shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing*: those that draw sap from Christ, and are grafted into him, must need bud and bloom and bring forth fruit; these

theſe are the *trees planted by the rivers of water, that bring forth their fruit in their ſeaſon, Pſal.* 1. 3. for as ancient men, ſo eſpecially ancient Chriſtians have their judgement ripened by their experience, and mellowed by time, others may be, and uſually are more heady, raſh and ſenſorious, and have a more hot, and burning zeal, but it is not according to knowledge; now zeal without knowledge (as one ſaith) is like mettle in a blinde horſe, which ofttimes ſerves but to break his own or the riders neck, their zeal is like that of the Apoſtles, *James* and *John*, *Luk.* 9. 54. who would have called for fire from heaven to conſume the inhoſpitable *Samaritans*, as *Elijah* did, but this wilde fire was never kindled on Gods hearth, as *Elijahs* was; this became not a goſpel frame of ſpirit; but this younger fruit is not ſo pleaſant to the taſte; we may ſay of this, as Chriſt ſpeaks of wine, *Luk.* 5. 39. no man having drunk old wine, preſently deſireth new, for (ſaith he) the old is better; Now as age clarifies wine and ripens it, ſo doth experience ripen mens judgements, young profeſſors make a great noiſe, and a great ſhew in the world, they bud and bloom, and many of them bring forth fruit, yet is not their fruit ſo pleaſant till it be ripened by age, and mellowed by experience; they are more heady (as I ſaid)

and

and ſenſorious, and apt to condemn thoſe that cannot ſee with their eyes, that differ from them, though it be in circumſtantials and things of ſmall concerns; yea perhaps diſrobe them of their graces, as if their hearts liks *Jehu's* were the touchſtone of ſincerity, and their judgement the touchſtone of truth; but ancient Chriſtians have learnt Chriſt better, and ſtudied their own hearts more, and will yield a grain of allowance to others, as knowing they need it themſelves, and where they ſee the vitals of Religion preſerved, they will reach out the right hand of fellowſhip, though it be to men of a contiary perſwaſion in leſſer matters; yea, they will love thoſe better, and value them more then they do thoſe of their own perſwaſion, where they cannot ſee ſuch evident ſignes of grace, but many times in young profeſſors a little difference about circumſtantialls caſts ſuch a miſt before their eyes, that they cannot ſee any grace at all in their antagoniſts: a grown Chriſtian owns Chriſt whereever he ſees him, yea, though it be in one that hath wronged him, and he verily thinks hates him, or though it be in one that ſtands in his light, or in his way to preferment; there is honourable mention made of an old diſciple, *Acts.* 21. 16. a gray-headed experienced Chriſtian, a father, 1 *Joh.* 2. 13. *you are*

*are they* ( ſaith Chriſt ) *that have continued with me, and I appoint unto you a kingdome as my father hath appointed unto me, Luk.* 22. 28. 29. God will reward thoſe that are ancient ſervants eſpecially : *Age ſhould ſpeak* ( ſaith *Elihu* ) *and multitude of years ſhould ſhew wiſdome, Job.* 32. 7. It was a duty commanded by God, and yet is incumbent upon us, *to riſe up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, Lev.* 19. 32. but then much more an old Chriſtian, *the hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteouſneſs, Pro.* 16. 31. Naturaliſts obſerve the herb *Cudweed* which the Herbaliſts call *herbam impiam*, whoſe younger branches ſtill yeeld flowers to overtop the elder, ſuch weeds grow too rife among us, but it is an ill ſoil that produceth them : *Rehoboam* neglecting the milder and ſafer counſel of his grave Senators, and following the harſher counſel of green wits, ruined himſelf, and loſt ten of the twelve tribes, who revolted from him ; we ſeldome finde an antient profeſſor apoſtatize or run into errours or hereſy, but it is too frequently ſeen in younger men, there are many take up Religion ſuddenly, and in a few weeks are above their teachers, yea, above all the Miniſters in the Countrey, and ſome of them get above Ordinances, yea, run the whole circle of errors, till they end in Athieſm or profaneſs,

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the place where they ſet out: the devil deals by them as *Eliſha* did by the *Syrians*, 2 *King.* 6. 19. he brings them to *Samaria* when they thought they had been going to *Dothan*: he leads them to hell, and perſwades them it is the neareſt way to heaven: oh my ſoul, let not the devil thus deceive thee, but ask advice of the wiſeſt counſellors; own Chriſt whereever thou ſeeſt him, and make not thy own judgement the teſt to try all other mens, nor with *Jehu* thine own heart the touchſtone to try others: judge the tree by the fruit, not by the leaves, and profeſſors not by their words, but by their works; grow in grace, as thou groweſt in years, ſo maiſt thou be an old diſciple; oh my God, make me fruitful, and let my fruit be pleaſant to thy taſte, and let the laſt be bitterer then the firſt.

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*Upon a leavy yet barren tree.*

82. *Med.* FInding a tree that at a diſtance ſhew'd fair, but at hand produced nothing but leaves, when I expected better fruit, it minded me of the fruitleſs figtree, mentioned *Mar.* 11. 12. *&c.* that deceived even Chriſt himſelf, for he *being hungry, and ſeeing a figtree a far off, having leaves he came, if haply he might finde any thing there-*

*on,*

*on, and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for the time of figs was not yet,* probably the time of ripe figs was not yet, but in his neceſſity he would have contented himſelf with thoſe that were green, and being thus diſappointed, he ſaid, *never fruit grow more upon thee, and the figtree withered and dyed, and his Diſciples marvelled,* and well they might, for no conjurer with all his skill could have done the like; me thinks this barren tree reſembles many in our times, *that have a form of godlineſs, but deny the power of it, 2 Tim. 3. 5.* they have leaves but no fruit, a ſhadow but no ſubſtance; thoſe hollow profeſſors are like an old tree, tall but pithleſs, ſapleſs, and unſound; theſe men do as players in a Comedy, in voice and geſture act divine duties, but in heart deny them; formality (as one ſaith) is like a bull-ruſh, the colour freſh, the skin ſmooth, but within nothing but a ſpungeous ſubſtance; *they have a name to live, but are dead, Rev. 3. 1.* they cry, the temple of the Lord, when they matter not the Lord of the temple; they content themſelves with a bare name without the nature of Chriſtians, *they draw near to God with their mouths, and honour him with their lips, when their heart is far from him; Mat. 15. 8.* all their holineſs is in externals, and nothing elſe but a brainleſs head, and ſoulleſs body; they have leaves to ſhew,

but no fruit; words but no works; a ſhew, but no ſubſtance; their religion lies in the tongue and brain, but never reaches the heart, nor ſeaſons the life, they are moſt in externals, little in internals; they regulate their words and actions, but the heart is not reſtrained or purified; the heat of their zeal appears chiefly, if not only, in their words, but the heart is cold enough; they take up the eaſie, cheap, and ſafeſt part of duty, but the difficult, dangerous, or coſtly part they meddle not with; they make a ſhew of what they are not, and brag of what they have not, and then they laugh in their ſleeves to think, how they have couzened and put a cheat upon the world, they worſhip that God in the Church, that they matter not in the cloſet, they do no religious duty without witneſs, haply for fear God ſhould deny what he hath received from them; they are like rotten wood, they ſhine in the night, but look upon them in the day, and you will finde the cheat; they are like the red and blew flowers in the cornfield, fine to look upon, good for little, but to peſter the corn: they are like candles they uſually go out in an offenſive ſnuff; they are Saints abroad, and devils at home, and uſually more dangerous when they appear like Saints, then when they ſhew themſelves in their colours, and act the devils part bare-


faced,

faced, but doubtleſs theſe are not the men that God will accept, nor this is not the ſervice he requires, *he is a ſpirit, and will be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth, yea, the father ſeeketh ſuch to worſhip him, Fohn* 4. 23. 24. he calls for the heart, my *ſon* ( ſaith he ) *give me thy heart*, not thy tongue, or hands, but the heart; for if he have that, the reſt will follow, *Pro.* 23. 26. as the heart is by nature, God will have none of it, till the heart be renewed and given to the Lord, he will accept of nothing that comes from us; he calls for the heart, and ſays of it, as *Joſeph* did of *Benjamin, Gen.* 43. 3. *ye ſhall not ſee my face without it*, or as *David* did of *Michal*, 2 *Sam.* 3. 13. *thou ſhalt not ſee my face except thou bringeſt Michal, Sauls daughter when thou comeſt*; Theſe men would give the Lord any thing but the heart, and he will own nothing without it; theſe profeſſors are like men in a boat, they look one way, and row another, or like the kite that ſoares aloft, towrs on high, as if they were all for heaven, and made light of all terreſtriall things, when ſtill her eye is upon her prey, and her heart glued to the ground, and rooted in the earth; they are like unto the peacock, they have fine feathers, but yet is but a dunghill-bird; but theſe ſhews will not always ſerve turn, God ſees through their thin masks, and will ere long pluck off their

vizour, *be not deceived God is not mocked*; there are none can ſteal to heaven in a diſguiſe, God will know him well that ſhall enter there; there is a ſure guard, and without this ticket of holineſs none will be admitted; this is Chriſt ſheep-mark, and thoſe, and thoſe alone that have it, ſhall ſtand upon his right hand, at judgment: when he comes to ſeek fruit and findes none, he will take up his axe; he hath long, and may for a while ſpare the tree for the vine-dreſſers ſake, but his patience will not always laſt; he will ſay, *pray not for this people*, for they are ripe for deſtruction; *when the ſins of the Amorites were full*, their deſtruction drew neer; when theſe borrowed robes are pluckt from the ſtageplayers backs (for ſo the word hypocrite ſignifies) then thoſe that acted the parts of Kings will be found but peaſants, and thoſe that acted the parts of honeſt men, will be found but cheats; indeed God hath many fans, and much of this chaff is blown away in this life; we have ſeen many that appeared to be ſomething, proved juſt nothing; but when Chriſt comes with refiners fire, and fullers ſoap, who can ſtand before this burning? the lamps of profeſſion may light a man to death, near to heaven; oh my ſoul, thou haſt made profeſſion of Religion a long time, what fruit doſt thou bring forth? if thou haſt

haſt nothing but tears thou maiſt expect that Chriſt ſhall ſay to thee, as to the fruitleſs figtree, *never fruit grow more on thee for ever*; or if thy fruit be bad, it will not be long but thou wilt be cut down; what cauſe haſt thou to fear that art ſo ſenſible of ſo much unſavory, and rotten fruit, and of ſo little that is good? up then and be doing, that thy laſt days may be thy beſt days, and thy beſt wine laſt; oh my good God, though hypocriſy lodge in me, let it not reign in me; give me truth in the inward parts, keep my heart ſound in thy teſtimonies, and I ſhall be ſafe.

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*Upon a dead tree.*

83. *Med.* OBſerving a dead tree in the orchard that had neither fruit nor leaves, and ſo was neither for profit nor pleaſure, for fruit nor ornament, but rather an encumbrance to the ground, and a deformity to the place, I began upon this Obſervation to conſider, that this was the caſe of many a poor dead ſoul amongſt us, who though planted in Gods vineyard, hedged about by his providence, and watered with the dew of heaven, and manured by the skilfulleſt vine-dreſſers, yet remains dead, fruitleſs, and uſeleſs, and hath done ſo many years, and

hath done nothing all this while but cumber the ground, and keep a room, and did but grow worſe and worſe, and every day more fitter for the fire then other, this minded me of Gods mercy and mans wickedneſs, Gods mercy in ſparing ſuch unprofitable wretches, ſome of them 50 or 60 years together, and all that while ſending his vinedreſſers to dig and dung, and manure them from year to year, that never yielded any good fruit in their lives, and mans wickedneſs that will not be won upon by all theſe entreaties and continued favours, that are ſo hard, that neither the ſun nor the rain can ſoften, neither fair means nor foul can work upon them, and to this day do yet remain a reproach to the place they live in; *for ſin* ( ſaith *Solomon* ) *is a reproach to any people, Pro.* 14. 34. *when righteouſneſs exalteth a Nation* : True Religion and the power of godlineſs is the beauty and bulwark of a Nation, but ſin is a deformity , and an evil diſeaſe, it is the ſnuff that dims our candle, yea, threatens the removal of our candleſtick ; *Capernaum* that once was lifted up to heaven, is threatned to be caſt down to hell, if a dead tree deform a well-regulated orchard, and is ſuch an offence that it will not be endured by the owner, nor be ſuffered to ſtand ; or if a dead carkaſs be ſo loathſom a thing , that in a little time the nea-

reſt

reſt and deareſt relations, and the moſt intimate friends are weary of it, how loathſome then is a dead ſoul to God, though the unſavoury ſmell of it be not perceived by natural men; for how can one dead man ſmell another? you may as well expect good fruit from a dead tree, as any good action from a dead man, perhaps ſomething good for the matter may be done by a natural man, as prayer, faſting, and almeſ-deeds from the *Phariſees*, but the manner or ends ſpoil all, but he that can *ſay to dry bones, live*, can ſay to a dead ſoul, live; and he that at the firſt *brought light out of darkneſs*, can enlighten a darkned underſtanding: The ſoul can act nothing truly good, or acceptable to God, till it be taken off the ſtock of nature, and planted into that generous vine Chriſt, then will it bear good fruit: when it is nouriſhed with ſap from this root, it muſt needs germinate and bring forth, but without this there is neither bud nor bloſſome: the ſoul by nature brings forth briars, and brambles, thorns and thiſtles, weeds, and baggage, for to theſe it is not dead, but only to good works; theſe other are the fruits of the curſe, and theſe will choak the good ſeed, and render it unprofitable; the heart is alive to thoſe, but dead to grace and holineſs: of natural men (God ſaith) *their vine is the vine of Sodom and of the field*

*of Gomorrha, their grapes are grapes of gall, and their cluſters are bitter ; their wine is the poyſon of dragons and the cruel venime of aſps :* their works, yea, their beſt works are pernitious ; the vine is their corrupt nature, and the grapes their evil works, which proceed from this vine ; *their ſpot is not the ſpot of Gods people*, *Deut.* 32. 5. the ſaints have their ſpots, but theſe are not like theirs, they are not ſo deeply ingraven, wicked mens ſpots are like the *Leopards*, not only in the skin but in the fleſh, yea, in the very heart, and therefore can be cured by none, but Chriſt the great Phyſitian ; they cannot be cured by the art of man, or waſht away by any water ; the ſin of the ſaints is but like the viper on *Pauls* hand, through Gods mercy they hurt him not : how many of theſe dead trees may we obſerve among us, yea, how few that be alive, and few bear ſo much as a leaf, they make no profeſſion of Religion at all, but deform the place where they are, and procure a curſe upon it : I fear it may be ſaid of *England* in a ſpiritual ſence, as once it was ſaid of *Egypt*, *there was not a family that there was not ſome dead perſon in it*, and I fear there are very few free amongſt us, nay, are not moſt familyes all thus ſpiritually dead ? and it appears they are dead, when after twenty years dreſſing, pruning, watering and manuring,

and

and that by the moſt skilfull husbandmen, who have ſpent their time, their ſtrength, and their lives in the work, yet they do not bring forth one leaf, much leſſe any good fruit; and there is none can cure them, but he that can put life into them, and ſay to a dead ſoul, live; and can tranſplant them from the ſtock of nature into that noble vine Chriſt; that they are dead is apparent, for their ſouls have all the ſymptoms of death upon them, they have neither heat, nor breath nor ſence nor motion; if God call they hear not; if his hand be ſtretched out they obſerve it not; if a load of ſin ly upon them as heavy as a mountain of lead, they feel it not; nor the deep gaſhes ſin makes in the ſoul: preſent before a dead man the bloudieſt ſpectacle that ever was beheld, or the pleaſanteſt ſight that ever was ſeen, all is one, he ſees neither the one nor the other, the roaring cannon, and the ſweeteſt muſick is all one; the ſweeteſt ſavour, and the fulſomeſt ſtink, he cannot difference; the lighteſt feather, and the heavieſt mountain, ſignify the ſame; the ſweeteſt meat, and the rankeſt poyſon: and why? becauſe he is dead: no more can a dead ſoul judge of ſpiritual things; promiſes and threatnings are all alike, he is moved neither with the one or with the other: oh my ſoul, this hath been thy caſe, thou haſt been ſpiritually dead,

dead, *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*, thou haſt been ſpiritually deaf and dumb, and blinde and lame, and if it be better with thee, bleſs God for it, for it was he, and not thy ſelf put life into thee : bring forth now fruit ſutable to a tree that hath life, that is tranſplanted into Chriſt, that hath had ſuch planting, dreſſing, and manuring, as thou haſt had, that Gods labour be not loſt upon thee : oh my God, remove thoſe obſtructions that hinder me from bearing fruit, and purge me that I may bring forth more fruit, put life into me, and I ſhall live.

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*Upon a tree ſeemingly dead in winter.*

84. *Med.* WHen I obſerved in the winter-ſeaſon, thoſe trees formerly green and flouriſhing, and richly laden, not with leaves only, but good fruit, but now were ſtript of all, and had neither leaf nor fruit, but lookt withered, dead, and dry, and no difference appeared between the fruitfull, and the barren, yea, ſcarce any between the living and the dead ; yet in the ſpring following, when the ſun ſhone upon them with a more direct ray, and warm beams, and the rain from heaven watered them, and refreſht them, they revived, ſprung again, budded, bloomed, and bare fruit ; I thought this

this did lively reſemble a poor deſerted ſouls condition, in her widowhood, when her husband hath forſaken her, and ſeems to give her a bill of divorce, when the ſun of righteouſneſs is either ſet upon her, clouded, or ecclipſt, or at leaſt very remote from her ſight, then with the *Marigold* ſhe droops, hangs the head, and is contracted into her ſelf, it is then winter with her, and little difference appears between her and a dead ſoul, at leaſt in her own apprehenſions: when God hides his face from the ſoul, or any thing interpoſes between them that ſhe cannot ſee him, then is ſhe in a languiſhing condition, and crys out with the ſpouſe, *did ye ſee him whom my ſoul loveth? Cant. 3. 3.* ſhe cannot hide this fire in her boſome, or conceal this love, but it will break out; then ſhe goes from one Ordinance to another, from one Miniſter to another, enquiring after her husband Chriſt, every corner of the houſe can witneſs her moan for his abſence; nothing will ſatisfie, nothing will content but him; give me Chriſt, or elſe I die, never did hungry man more earneſtly deſire meat, nor thirſty man deſire drink, or *Rachel* deſire children, then an hungry ſoul deſires Chriſt; *But when the ſun of righteouſneſs doth ariſe with healing in his wings, Mal. 4. 2.* the ſoul that before was cold and chill, now becomes lively and active;

theſe

theſe cheriſhing rays make her bud and bloom, and bring forth: what *Job* ſpeaks of a tree, ſeemingly dead and withered, yet (ſaith he) *through the ſcent of water it will bud and bring forth boughs like a plant, Job.*14.7. *&c.* is really true of ſuch a ſoul, that when ſhe is in a deſerted, and as ſhe imagines, a forſaken condition, ſeems dead and withered, yet at the return of Gods pleaſed face ſeems fruitful and flouriſhing; where there is life in the root it will ſpring; when tis really dead, winter and ſummer, all is a caſe: but though the winter may be long and ſharp, yet the ſpring will come and ſhew a difference between the living trees and the dead: and though God hide his face for a ſeaſon, and abſent himſelf for a time, to ſee how his ſpouſe will bear his abſence, and to try her affections, yet this ſun of righteouſneſs will ſhine again, and then where life is in the root, it will ſhew it ſelf in the branches; for God will not forſake any really that are not dead utterly: *for a little while* (ſaith God) *I hid my face, but with everlaſting kindneſs will I remember her, Iſay.*54. 8. ſometimes the poor ſoul verily thinks ſhe is forſaken, when God doth but like a father hide himſelf for a while, to try the childes affection, and every ſigh and ſob and ſorrowful tear goes to the fathers heart, his bowels yearn, and he cannot long conceal himſelf:

himſelf: that it is ſo between God and his children, ſee that pregnant place, *Iſay.*49.14. &c. *but Zion* (ſaid the Lord) *hath forſaken me, and my God hath forgotten me; can a woman forget her ſucking childe, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb, yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee; behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me:* never was tender-hearted father, or indulgent mother, more careful of their only childe then God is of his children; he will never forſake thoſe that do not forſake him, he will never give a bill of divorce to any, that are not willing to leave him, ſo that you ſee here, where there is life in the root, the ſpring will come when it ſhall again germinate and bud, but if it be really dead, it can never recover, but by the aſſiſtance of an omnipotent arm; no more can a dead ſoul, till it be grafted into the living vine, then that which was dead before ſhall germinate and ſpring; and when once thus tranſplanted, it ſhall never wither: though ſometimes it may be winter with it, and it make but a little ſhew, *yet the root of the matter is in it,* and when the ſpring returns it ſhall break forth, *God will never leave them nor forſake them*; See the Apoſtles confidence, *Rom.*8.35, 38, 39. *who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs,*

*neſs, or peril, or ſword? nay, in all theſe, we are more then conquerors through him that loveth us: for I am perſwaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*: theſe men of all others have cauſe to live merrily, yea, though it be but aſſurance of adherence; thoſe that *Chriſt loves, he loves to the end*: oh my ſoul, is it ſo, that grace may be hid in times of deſertion, as the ſap in the root, in the winter ſeaſon, or as fire under the aſhes, or as gold in the mine, or as a little Jewel in a great heap of aſhes, deſpair not then, neither be diſcouraged, though ſometimes thy grace be out of ſight, and thy God hide his face, and the ſun of righteouſneſs be clouded, and thy comforts eccliſped, remember with *David, the days of old, and the time* when God did ſmile upon thee; and though it be now winter, the ſpring will return: *whom God loveth, he loveth to the end, yea, with an everlaſting love*: oh my God, clear up my evidences for heaven, and make out ſuch diſcovery of thy love to my ſoul, that I may never be willing to leave thee, and then that thou wilt never forſake me.

*Upon a great tree toſſed with the winde.*

85. *Med.* WHen I obſerved ſome tall ſpreading trees, ſtretching forth their branches on every ſide, and were grown top-heavy, how they were toſt and tumbled with the winde and ſtorms, when ſmaller ſhrubs and leſſer trees were more free and ſecure, becauſe they lay under the winde, or had but a little inconſiderable head: I ſaw and obſerved, that it often came to paſſe, that if theſe great trees bare any fruit, it was blown down before it came to maturity, and ſeldome came to good, nay, not only the fruit but the leaves alſo were forced off by the violent guſts, and windes, and ſtorms, and ſometimes the boughs and branches alſo, yea, the tree it ſelf is often born down, by the tempeſt, when thoſe that were leſs and lower were more ſecure, and brought their fruit to maturity with leſs danger and hazard: This Obſervation made me think that theſe trees fittly reſembled great men, that made ſome profeſſion of religion, but few of them bring their fruit to maturity, for theſe lye more open to temptations, and are more liable to dangers then others are, and the devil hath a greater ſpight at them then at others, for they may do him more miſchief, and therefore he is more

more unwilling they ſhould break priſon then others, and hangs more fetters and irons upon them: great Commanders are more narrowly watcht if they are priſoners, and more dearly ranſomed then private ſouldiers: hence it was, that *Elymas* the ſorcerer, by the devils inſtigation, ſought to turn away *Surgius Paulus the deputy from the faith*; *Act.* 13. 8. as knowing he was like to be a leading man which way ever he took: If great men have but leaves, they are invyed for the leaves ſake, and few of them ever bring forth fruit to maturity, yea, the leaves themſelves, their very profeſſion are oft times born down by the ſtorm; I have ſeen ſome that I verily believed were well rooted and grounded, who yet upon approaching ſtorms have truckled under them, have hid their religion, diſſembled their profeſſion, and ſtole away from their colours, and all for fear of leaving, or loſing any part of their eſtates; This hath given me occaſion ſometimes to bleſs God, that hath freed me from ſome of thoſe temptations that others lie under, and hath given me *Agars* petition, *neither poverty nor riches, but food convenient*, and hath kept me almoſt all my days in a ſuffering condition: I conſidered I have the ſame nature as other men have, had I but the ſame temptations, I know not but I might have been as bad:

a great eſtate as it hath many cares and cumbers ſo many temptations accompanying it, and ſome men cannot bear it, no more then ſome mens heads can much wine or ſtrong drink: it is not the cage that makes the bird ſing, nor it is not abundance always that makes the heart light; a ſtaff may help a traveller, but a bundle of ſtaves will be but a trouble; ſo may a great eſtate to a godly man; I might have, like that young man mentioned, *Mat.* 19.20. &c. parted with Chriſt for a trifle: had he had but a ſmall eſtate, who knows but he might have proved a true convert; he cheapens heaven, bids fair for it, but they diſagreed about the price: a great eſtate breaks the bargain, as in the world it breaks many a marriage; the perſons like and love, but the womans portion will not anſwer the mans eſtate: this occaſioned Chriſt to tell us, how hard a thing it was for a rich man to be ſaved, *Mat.* 19. 24. *it is eaſier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle then for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God*: moſt mens honours change their manners, and they are the worſe for their wealth; if heaven be to be had upon no other terms, many will refuſe it; they would be gainers by their religion, however they reſolve to loſe nothing; many like *Diana's* Craftſmen, get their living by it; they will launch

no further into the deep, then they may return ſafe to the ſhore: many come to Chriſt haſtily, as this young man, but return heavily, when they hear the rate: All men love *Abrahams* boſome but few men love *Dives* door; all men love the jewel, but few will go to the price; all men would have the crown, but they love not the croſs that leads to it: Moſt men (eſpecially great ones) will meddle with no more religion then will do them good, or boot their needs or ſerve their deſignes; they will lanch no further into the ſeas then they can ſee the ſhoar; pride breeds in wealth, as worms do in apples; and he is a rich man indeed, that thinks himſelf never the greater, or never the better for his wealth: oh world, how haſt thou deceived thoſe that truſt in thee, and how haſt thou bought their profeſſion out of their hands for a trifle, and haſt had their ſouls into the bargain: how many write themſelves happy when they are loaden *with thick clay*? alaſs! what will this do for them in their greateſt need? poor *Spira* was betrayed by thee, to the ſhipwrack of faith and a good conſcience; ſo were *Judas*, *Demas*, *Ananias* and *Saphira*, and a thouſand more: theſe knew not the worth of the ſoul, nor the vanity of the world, that let the devil have ſo cheap a penyworth; they graſp ſo greedily after gold,

gold, that they loſt their God, and loved their ſin more then their ſouls, but what good will it do them when they want *a drop of water to cool their tongues*? *Luk.* 16. 24. oh my ſoul, bleſs God that hath freed thee from many temptations that others are overcome by: Covet not overmuch a proſperous condition, leſt God give it thee for thy portion: ſcorn with the *Eagle* to ſtoop ſo low as to ſeek thy meat upon a dunghill: undervalue not thy ſelf ſo much as to entertain ſo poor a ſuitor as the world is, when the ſun of God makes love to thee, who alone can pay thy debts and make thee happy: thou canſt not buy this gold too dear but the world thou maiſt, and moſt men do, when they purchaſe it with the bloud of their ſouls: thou canſt not overvalue this jewel, it is ten thouſand times better then thou canſt value it: oh my God, give me Chriſt and it ſufficeth, I need no other portion, I deſire no other happineſs, let me have him at any rate.

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*Upon trees green in ſummer, but ſtript off all in winter.*

86. *Med.* OBſerving further, that thoſe trees ſo fair and ſpecious, ſo green and flouriſhing in the ſummer, yet

when autumn came were ſtript of all their gallantry, and appeared bare, and ill favoured, dead and dry, and looked not like the ſame they were; It preſently ſtruck into my minde that this would ſhortly be the condition of all wicked men, let their proſperity be never ſo great, and their enjoyments in the world never ſo many, or large; the time is coming, all theſe like leaves will fly away with the winde, the nipping froſt of death, and the winde of affliction will make them fall; ſome carry *Lordſhips* on their backs, ſome *Earldomes*, ſome *Dukedomes*, and ſome few *Kingdomes*; among the Clergy, ſome carry ſeveral ſteeples on their backs, yea, ſome Deanaries, and ſome Biſhopricks, all theſe are but leaves, and will fall when Autumn winde blows, they cannot ſtand a winter-blaſt, death will level the great and the ſmall, the one with the other, and the Kings head ſhall then ſhew no impreſſion of a crown: Many rich men are like ſumpter-horſes, richly laden with gold and ſilver, and coſtly gems and Jewels all the day, but when night comes, and come it will ere long, they are ſtript of all, turned into a dirty ſtable and nothing to bring off but their gal'd backs; ſo theſe at death have nothing left but a gal'd conſcience: a pregnant example of this we have in the rich man, mentioned

*Luk.*

*Luk.* 16. 19. there was one *clothed in purple and fine linnen, and fared deliciouſly every day*, but it was but a little time before all thoſe leaves were ſtript off, and he had not left him one drop of water to cool his tongue: and he that a little before (as ſome imagine) denyed a crumb of bread to *Lazarus*, is now denyed a drop of water: Another example we have, *Luk.* 12. 16. of a rich man that had abundance, and began to ſing a *requiem* to his ſoul, *eat, drink, and be merry, thou haſt goods laid up for many years*; he was a right Epicure that made his gut his God: another *Sardanapalus*, eating that in earth (that *Auguſtine* ſaith) he muſt digeſt in hell, little thinking his death was ſo near, his glaſs was run, when he thought it was but new turned; *thou fool* (ſaith Chriſt) *this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee, and then whoſe are theſe?* he was ſhot as a bird with the bolt, while he was ſtaring at the bow: of rich men the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, *their glory will not follow them, neither ſhall they take any thing with them, Pſal.* 49. 17. then when death entreth into their lodging, and knocks at their doors, they may bid farewell to their well contriv'd houſes, ſumptuous buildings, pleaſant gardens, and delightful walks, yea, to all their bags of gold, ſo painfully got, ſo carefully kept, and ſo warily employed, even to the wounding of their conſciences

ſciences, the hardning of their hearts, and the loſs of their ſouls; then farewell all their pleaſures, their merry meetings, and their pot-companions, with their drunken revels, farewell then their cocks, their hawks, their hounds, and their whores, they muſt never more delight and recreate themſelves with theſe, for though whoremaſters, and whores, ſhall burn together in hell yet ſhall they not there burn in luſt one to the other, but their company ſhall be their torment, not their recreation; all theſe are but leaves the wind of death will blow away: Here are no may-games, nor morris-dances, or deluding ſhews to entertain our youthfull gallant, no ſtage-plays, for their divertiſement, no pleaſant Comedies acted but a diſmal Tragedy, wherein they are like to be the miſerable Actors, but will never come off with applauſe; there is no modiſh garb for our well-dreſt gallant, no, headtire but a flaming periwig, here is no uſe for looking-glaſs nor tiring-woman, no uſe of patches, powders, paints or friſling-irons, all theſe are out of mode and faſhion in thoſe Territories: here are no healths to pledge but that of damnation they ſo oft drunk in the days of their life, but never knew what it was till now, but now muſt pledge them to all eternity: But this is not all, their loſs will be greater, for they muſt loſe the

beatifical viſion of God bleſſed for ever, *in whoſe preſence there is joy, and at whoſe right hand are pleaſures for evermore* : then muſt they be everlaſtingly ſeparated from him, who is the chiefeſt good : Now they ſay to him, *depart from us, we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways, Job.* 21. 14. and then God will have none of their company, but will ſay, *depart from me*, &c. *Mat.* 7. 22. *and* 25. 41. oh direfull and dreadfull ſentence, ſuch as may make their heart-ſtrings crack, and their hearts break in pieces ; it breaths out nothing but fire and brimſtone, ſtings and horrours, wo and alaſs, ſeas of vengeance, the *worm that never dies and the fire that never ſhall be quenched* ; torments without end, and paſt imagination : in this life they cannot endure the company of the godly, they are either the object of their ſcorn or malice, but then they ſhall be eternally ſeparated, as far as heaven is from hell, or *Dives* from *Lazarus*, between whom *there is a great gulph fixed. Luk.* 16. 26. Then they ſhall loſe their ſouls which is incomparably their richeſt jewel, which they ſold for a trifle, and now it will be required, and they muſt ſtand to their bargain, not that they ſhall be annihilated, that news is too good to be true ; neither ſhall they loſe the faculties of them ; theſe ſhall be inlarged to their further torments, but they loſe

their God which is the life of their souls, and put them into the devils hands to be eternally tormented, they shall lose their bodies also for whose sake they sold their souls: in a word, all their happiness, and all their hopes, and all they accounted dear shall then be stript away, all these like leaves shall fly before the winde of death, and in the room of these, everlasting destruction of body and soul shall succeed: oh death what a change wilt thou make at thy coming, and how unwelcome wilt thou be to those that live at ease in possession; oh my soul, *remember the days of darkness, for they are many*, *Eccl.* 11. 8. provide against this time, that this may not be thy case, for ere long all these leaves will be blown down; provide therefore treasures that neither man, nor devil can strip from thee; provide a mansion in heaven before this earthly tabernacle be dissolved; Lord, assist me in this work, without thee my endeavours are vain.

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## *Upon a tree green all the winter.*

87. *Med.* WHen I observed how green some trees were all the winter, and how flourishing even in the frost and snow, when others are stript naked and left bare, and seem dead and withered, and

and that neither the pinching froſt, nor bluſtring windes, neither ſtorms nor tempeſts could diſroab them or change their ſummer-ſuit to winter colours, that neither ſummers ſun, nor ſcorching heat could make them wither, nor winter cold, nor ſtorms could make them caſt their leaves, nor turn their luſty green to any other colour: I began to think theſe trees much reſemble a Chriſtian, that had the life of grace within him, and is planted into that generous vine Chriſt, and ſucks ſap and nouriſhment from this root; theſe alſo are green when others that ſtand upon their own root, wither and decay: But theſe trees of righteouſneſs are *planted by the rivers of water, and bring forth their fruit in due ſeaſon, and their leaf alſo ſhall not wither, but whatſoever they do, it ſhall proſper, Pſal.* 1. 3. *&c.* when others are driven like chaff before the winde from the face of the earth; yet the ſun-ſhine of proſperity cannot wither thoſe, nor the winde of adverſity blow them down or their fruit, nor remove their leaves: *Job* was one of theſe trees of righteouſneſs, green at all times, winter and ſummer, in his proſperity his leaf flouriſhed; for God himſelf gives as ample a teſtimony of him, as ever he did of mortal man, *Job.* 1. 8. *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant* Job? *that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and eſcheweth evill,*

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*and when he was in adversity he still* retains his integrity, *Job.* 27. 5. 6. *till I die I will not remove my integrity from me, my righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go, my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live*, and see what end God makes with him, he crowns him, and chronicles him for his sincerity and patience, all his affliction could not make him lose one leaf: *Joseph* when he was in prosperity fears God, and when in adversity he fears him also; when he was a bondslave in *Potiphars* house, he resisteth the temptations of his mistriss, with this consideration, *how shall I commit this great wickedness, and sin against God? Gen.* 39. 11. *Joseph* remains in *Egypt* like a pearl in a puddle, he had set God at his right hand, and would not be moved, though Satan knock oft at the door, there was none within to answer, though *the iron* (as the Psalmist saith) *entred into Josephs soul, yet sin could not*; when the devil could not prevail against him, by his hard bondage he trys to do it by a Dalilahs temptation; he struck fire oft but it fell among wet tinder; *Joseph* was *semper idem*, when he was wrongfully cast into prison, he keeps his integrity still, and God owns him, and gave him favour, and after when he was advanc't to honour, and made enter in *Egypt*, he did not forget his God, nor God did not forget him: all the hot gleams

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of prosperity, nor all the blustring storms of adversity could not shake down any of his fruit, or stir any of his leaves: it is true, wicked men in their prosperity are said to be *spreading themselves like a green bay-tree*, but this denotes the prosperity of the body, not of the soul; these leaves at death will drop as well as others, and their prosperity and happiness will draw to an end, and all their enjoyment will be but as a thin mist before the winde soon scattered; *but mark the upright, and behold the just, for the end of that man is peace, Psal.* 37. 37. *I shall be* (saith the Psalmist,) *as a green olive-tree in the house of God, Psal.* 52. 5. when those that trust not in the Lord, shall be destroyed: It was not banishment that could separate *David* from the stock in which he was planted, nor make his fruit to fall, or his leaves to fade; it was not affliction could make him lose his integrity, nor a kingdome could make him forget his God: The Martyrs in their greatest sufferings kept up their profession green, and flourishing, the devil could not get one leaf down with all his mighty gusts and *Boreas* blasts; the fire it self could not scorch nor wither them; The apprehension of danger could not shake a leaf from *Daniel*, or either of his three associates; they held out a profession before the King, and his Nobles in the sight of the fiery furnace, and

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the Lyons Den; it was neither force nor fraud, fear nor favour, riches nor honour, preferments nor promotions, that could make them ſtart aſide from their God, by omitting any known duty, or committing any known ſin, but where there is no ſap in the root, the branches muſt needs wither, as we have had too ſad experience in our days, when the moſt have their fruit blown down, and their leaves withered: a true Chriſtian is always the ſame, lay him where you pleaſe, as a pearl whether in the cabinet, or in the dunghill, retains its vertue ſtill, ſo a Chriſtian whether on the throne with *David*, on the dunghill with *Job*, in the miry dungeon with *Jeremy*, in the ſtocks with *Paul* and *Silas*, yet are ſtill the ſame; proſperity nor adverſity, friend nor foe, man nor devil can ſeperate him from Chriſt; oh my ſoul, get life in the root, and thou wilt hold out in the winter, ſuck ſap from Chriſt, for nothing elſe will keep thee from withering, or preſerve thy leaves from falling, feed upon that bread of life, and the water of life, and thou ſhalt never dye; *thy garments then will be always white, and thy head want no ointment*, *Eccl.* 9. 8. neither winde nor weather can hurt thee if thou be in this vine, but if thou be not, though thou make never ſo glorious a ſummer ſhew, in winter thou wilt be

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ſtript of all: oh my God, let my heart be found in thy ſtatutes, *let the root of the matter be in me*, take me off the ſtock of nature, and plant me in the vine, Chriſt, ſo ſhall I never wither.

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*Upon trees decay for want of dreſſing.*

88. *Med.* OBſerving ſome trees that had formerly been fruitful, but now began to decline, I obſerved and ſearched out more narrowly what the cauſe was, and I perceived it was not age that did it, but I perceived it was want of good huſbandry, they had been neglected and wanted pruning, cleanſing, dunging, watering, for they were peſtered with weeds, and moſs, and canker, and ſuckers, and other hurtful annoyances, which diverted the nouriſhment which ſhould have fed & cheriſhed them; and when I had obſerved the diſeaſe, I applyed the remedy accordingly; I cauſed the ground to be rid, and the trees pruned and cleanſed, digged, dunged, and manured, and in proceſs of time the event anſwered my expectation, and the trees recovered their priſtine beauty, and goodneſs; this accident produced this following meditation: I thought an orchard reſembled the Church of God, for ſo it is called, *Canticles*,

*Canticles*, 4. 13. *thy plants are as an orchard of pomegranats* : by plants are meant the ſeveral members of the Church, which here are compared to pomegranats, which are healthful and preſervative, yea, to ſpicknard, and ſaffron, calamus, and cinnamon, and other chief ſpices, coſtly and precious : now as it is in an orchard, ſome are barren, ſome fruitful, ſome bring good fruit, ſome bad, according to the nature of the tree, ſome are great trees, and ſome ſmall, ſo it is in the viſible Church of God, the members thereof are of all ſorts and ſizes, and bring forth ſeveral ſorts of fruits; ſome bring forth only leaves, and ſome are dead, and bring forth neither leaf nor fruit, ſome their fruit is ſowr and unſavoury, ſome bitter, and ſome bring forth good fruit to perfection according to the nature of the tree, thoſe tranſplanted uſually bring forth the beſt fruit ; But as in an orchard it is not enough that it be planted, and grafted, and that with the choiſeſt fruit, but continual care is to be had of ordering, manuring, dunging, watering, and fencing it, for the earth being an own mother to briars, brambles, weeds, and thiſtles, but a ſtep-mother to herbs and flowers, and fruit-bearing trees, ſhe will ſoon produce her own brats, and feed them with her breaſts, and ſtarve the other, if not prevented ; ſo it is in

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the Church, Gods plantation will never thrive, if there are not labourers, vine-dreſſers, to water and manure them; the devil will ſend ſome of his briars and thorns to choak them, and ſuck the ſap that ſhould nouriſh them, *the world loves her own*, and hates thoſe that are Chriſts; there muſt be ſome *Pauls* to plant, and ſome *Apollo's* to water, ſome Miniſters to manure, ſome labourers to prune, or thoſe plants degenerate and grow wilde or be choaked with weeds and baggage, and God hath ſent plenty of thoſe, that nothing be wanting on his part; and oh how happy are thoſe people that meet with labourers and not loyterers, thoſe that have both will and skill to do good, but God may complain of many as he did of old, *I ſent them not, yet they run; I ſpake not to them, yet they propheſy*, *Jer.* 23. 2. there are too many that are not gifted nor qualified for the place, too many that are idle and will not work, loiterers rather then labourers, and many that minde the wages, more then the work, and the fleece more then the flock; they would have the profit but be at neither pains nor coſt, but the vineyard will never proſper under ſuch mens hands: many honourable titles are given to the Miniſters, all which denote diligence and duty, as well as dignity, they are call'd *watchmen*, *Eze.* 3. 17, but many of them

them are blinde, *Iſa.* 1. 56. 10. or if they ſee the enemy coming they give no warning to prepare: they are cal'd *ſhepherds*, but they feed themſelves, and not the flock; they are cal'd *lights*, but many of them walk in darkneſs, or hide their light under a buſhel, or in a dark lanthorn, or are but an *ignis fatuus*, that leads men out of the way, not in it; they are cal'd *ſtars*, but ſome of them prove *comets* or blazing-ſtars, threatning ruine to the beholders; they are called the *Salt of the earth*, yet many of them have loſt their ſavour; and a deal of ſuch unſavoury ſalt we have; they are cal'd *angels*, but they reſemble evil angels in their converſations; they are cal'd *builders*, but what they build with the one hand, they pluck down with the other, nay, deſtroy what others have built; they are cal'd *ſtewards*, but live as if they ſhould never give account of their ſtewardſhip; they are cal'd *husbandmen*, but neither care to plant nor to ſow, to water, nor to manure: they are cal'd *vine-dreſſers*, but take little pains in the vineyard: in a word, they are cal'd *Nurſes*, but prove dry nurſes, and ſuffer the children to ſtarve for want of food; many of them heap one ſteeple upon another as it is fabled the giants did *Oſſa* upon *Pelion*, and think that way to ſcale heaven, but they will hardly aſcend with ſuch a load upon

upon their backs; they have the greateſt charge in the world and many take leaſt care; they will take the charge of hundreds, that perhaps they never ſaw; but ſuch lights as theſe often go out in a ſnuff, and ſuch ſtars they are, to whom *is reſerved the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever*, a deſcription of ſuch Miniſters you have *Iſay.* 56. 10, 11, 12. but *Paul* was not ſuch a ſhepherd, *for three years ſpace he ceaſed not, day nor night, but in publike, and from houſe to houſe he warned his hearers with tears*, *Act.* 20. 31. 2. *Cor.* 6. 5. *Act.* 20. 26. and happy are thoſe people that meet with ſuch vine dreſſers, and ſad is their condition that meet with loiterers, and not labourers: Oh my ſoul, deſpiſe not the miniſtry but *honour them for their works ſake, eſpecially thoſe that labour in the word and doctrine*, for thoſe are worthy of double honour; and in thy place and ſtation minde the welfare of thy own ſoul, and thoſe about thee; let not the bloud of ſouls be laid at thy door, theſe honourable titles belong to labourers not loiterers, to painfull preachers not to dumb dogs: oh my God, forgive all my former neglects, and for the future though I be unprofitable let me not be unfaithful.

*Upon promiſing trees after blaſted.*

89. *Med.* IN an early ſpring when there was great likelihood of much fruit, when the trees were richly beautifyed with plenty of buds and bloſſoms, and there was great expectation of a plentifull year of fruit, behold in a moment all our hopes were daſht, and the trees were ſuddenly blaſted with lightning, or an evil winde, and ſo thoſe that even now were in the heigth of their pride and glory, were now made barren, and the very leaves as well as the bloſſomes were ſcorched, and by this means our hopes were ſuddenly daſht, and the trees rendred unfruitful; This ſudden yet divine providence ſhews to us the power of God in diſpoſing theſe outward enjoyments, for as he doth for his peoples ſin and abuſe of his mercies, threaten, *to take away his corn in the time thereof, and his wine in the ſeaſon thereof, and recover his wooll and his flax, which he had given her to cover her nakedneſs, Hoſe.* 2.9. ſo hath he power to take away other fruits of the field, and to fuſtrate the hopes of the husbandman, for the power to give and to take away he hath reſerved in his own hands, *Job.* 1.19. This providence how dark ſoever it ſeemed, yeelded me ſome light, and taught me this profitable leſſon,

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not to put overmuch confidence in any earthly enjoyment, how promiſing ſoever, nor to call any thing my own before I have it in my poſſeſſion, nor depend upon it too much then, for there is an uncertainty, and a vanity writ upon all theſe outward things, they are like unto *Jonah's* gourd that grew up in a night, and periſht in a night, and have a worm bred in them, that many times eats out their very hearts; when God blows upon any earthly enjoyment, it oft vaniſheth away, and comes to nothing; *Hag.* 1. 6. *ye have ſown much and bring in little, ye eat but ye have not enough, ye drink but ye are not filled with drink, ye cloath you but you are not warm, and he that earneth wages puts it into a bag with holes,* &c. *ye looked for much, and lo it came to little, and when ye brought it home I did blow upon it,* &c. and when he blows upon any earthly enjoyment, it withers and comes to nothing; oh how much would it conduce to our happineſs to ſet a light eſteem upon thoſe ſo tranſitory, ſo fading enjoyments, and to reſign up our wills to Gods will in all things, then ſhould we never be fruſtrated in our expectations, or diſappointed in our hopes, and what is beſt for us would ſurely come to paſs, but when we expect great matters and they fall ſhort of our expectation, then we are apt to be caſt down, and our hearts deſpond; but if we expect little, we ſhall

not be much troubled if it prove but little; *wilt thou ſet thy heart* (ſaith *Solomon*) *upon that which is not, riches take themſelves wings and fly away*, *Pro.* 23. 5. they will never pay us for our pains, or countervail our coſt; *the faſhion of this world paſſeth away, and the glory thereof*; riches were never true to thoſe that truſted in them, earthly enjoyments ofttimes prove as tranſitory, as a haſty headlong torrent, they paſs away as ſwift as a ſhip, a bird, an arrow, a poſt that paſſeth by, a weavers ſhuttle, or if you can name any thing ſwifter in pace, or quicker in motions; The ſame day for ought we know found *Job* the richeſt man in all the Eaſt, and left him poor, even to a proverb, *as poor as* Job, *Pſal.* 37. 35. *I have ſeen the wicked in great power, ſpreading himſelf like a green bay-tree, yet he paſt away, and lo he was not; I ſought him, but I could not finde him*: our age doth afford a thouſand examples of this nature, thouſands in *Ireland*, many in *England*, have been rich ore night, and ſtript of all ere morning; yea, in *Ireland* it is imagined two hundred thouſand ſuddenly loſt their lives, with their eſtates, and were cruelly butchered by the bloud-thirſty Papiſts: how oft may we ſee in our times, great families rooted out, God blows upon them, blaſts them, and they wither, and their great eſtates dwindle into nothing, and that by

by an insensible hand of God, when no man can give an account or reason of it; many promising young men that were like to thrive and grow rich in the world, God hath blown upon them, and they have come to nothing: Many that have had promising parts, great naturals gifts, and endowments, and God had lent them many talents, but they not improving them, God hath called for them up, and given them to those that better deserved them, and they have met with a sensible decay, though it stole insensibly upon them, that they may say, as *Zedechiah* to *Micaiah*, *which way went the spirit of God from me to go to thee?* it is no hard thing to observe a wane and decay of Gods gifts in those that use them not, their abilities fail amain when once they begin to fail, till at last God lays them aside as broken vessels, and causeth them to be forgotten *as dead men out of minde*, *Psal.* 31. 21. and as useless, lazy, unprofitable, and unfaithful servants, *they shall be cast into outer darkness*: as they buried their talents, so their souls seem buried in their bodies for a while, till both be buried in hell for ever; Many in our times also that have had seeming grace, and like the glow-worm made a great shew in a dark night, yet have had their light extinguished, and they have proved but like rotten shining wood; many

that have had lamps in their hands, have had them blown out for lack of oyl; Many have seemed like corn fresh, and flourishing, but proved like that on the stony ground, or on the house-top, never came to maturity; when the winde turns they soon kick up their profession, and steal away from their colours; or when the sun of persecution is up, wither: oh my soul, promise not thy self great things in the world, neither content thy self with small things for eternity; be as serious for grace, as others are for gold, and make as sure for heaven, as others do for the world; if thou wilt plant, let it be in a better soil, then maist thou expect a better encrease, neither winde, nor sun, frost, nor snow, thunder nor lightning, can blast or nip those flowers of paradice; Lord, take off my affection from the world, and set them upon Christ, then shall I never be disappointed of my hopes.

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*Upon leaves falling in Autumn.*

90. *Med.* WHen I observed in autumn after a nipping frost, seconded by a gust of winde, how fast the leaves fell from the trees, that in a short time those that were cloathed in a lusty green, began to look withered, dead and dry, and

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to put on their winter coat, methought this resembled much our mortality, when the autumn of age comes upon us, these bodies of ours like leaves fall of themselves into deaths lap, but seldom do they hang on so long, some casual accident or other oft bears them down before they wither; ofttimes some common calamity, as the sword, or pestilence, or other contagious disease, like a violent tempest, doth bear all down before it: two hundred thousand together in *Ireland*, and very many in *England*, death mowed down in a few days, where they fell as leaves before the winde, or as corn before the reapers hook; it is noted, that in one years space, a hundred thousand fell in our chief city, blown down by the blast of death, and thus in all the world throughout, men are swept away, as with a sweeping storm, some few are gathere in in a good old age, but the most of men blown down while they are yet green: the falling of these leaves did also seem to me to resemble the apostacy, and downfall of hypocrites, the house of whose profession is built upon the sand, and cannot resist the winde and waves; this is a foolish builder that neither sat down first to reckon the charges, neither was at the cost to lay a firm foundation, neither considered, the rain would fall, the windes blow, and the floods

beat, and overthrow his buildings: they follow Christ as a dog follows his master, till he meets with carion, and then turns him up: as *Orphah* made a fair proffer of going along with *Naomi*, but better considering, returned back: It is noted of the *chesunt*, if it be not broken at the top when east into the fire, it leaps out again, so doth a hypocrite when he comes to be tried, he is like a false jade in a teem, which being put to a stress, turns tail and tramples, but the godly hold on and persist: In the summer when the sun of the gospel shines upon them, they hold on, and look fresh and fragrant, and seem to be not only members, but pillars of the Church, as the Apostles had a good opinion of *Judas*, so that they rather mistrusted themselves then him, and cryed out, *Master, is it I*; so true believers rather mistrust themselves then those forward professors, yet in persecuting times these fall as leaves before the winde, and wither as the corn on the stony ground, or that which grows upon the hose top, and discover a fruitless bulk, and withering root; the stony ground *received the word with joy*, and endured for a while, but when the sun was up, they were quickly offended: *Herod* may *hear the word gladly*, and endure for a time, but being not sound at the heart, he fals off: a branch in a moist

place

place though it have no root, may for a while bud and leave, but when heat comes will certainly wither, and the leaves fall: when Christianity is in credit, many will cry *Hosanah to the son of* David, and when in contempt they will cry, *crucify*; a hypocrite, will be catching at comforts as children do at sweet-meats, ere they are soundly humbled, and are stuffing themselves pillows with the promises, that they may sin more securely: when the *Jews* were in favour, many turn *Jews* for fear of the *Jews*; and when in danger, their seeming friends prove their sorest enemies, they are professors upon designe, and they will be religious while religion suits their interest, and promotes their advantage, but when it hinders them, they lay it aside, as the workman doth the tool he needs not, or will not serve his turn, and takes another; if profaneness, yea persecution serves his designe better, he will make use of that; if a few prayers, or outside duties, which are like to cost them little, they are content to go to heaven this way, but if it come to sufferings or forsaking any thing for Christ, *vadet Christus cum suo Evangelio*, let Christ go with his gospel, and keep his heaven to himself, for he will have none of it; they will not buy heaven at so dear a rate: The Gospel hath many swallow-friends, which

will

will be gone at the approach of winter: when the corn is gone, the rats leave the barn, and when no ſecular advantage is in ſight, but rather ſtorms appearing, many profeſſors will be no longer religious, but Chriſt tells us, *he that loveth father or mother, ſon or daughter more then him, is not worthy of him, Mat.* 10. 37. becauſe he holdeth any one worthy of more love then Chriſt: God will ſet no lower a rate on his ſon and glory, he that will have this pearl muſt part with all, *Mat.* 13. 44. 45, and he that doth ſo, makes a good bargain; we cannot buy this gold too dear, or give too much for heaven and happineſs; he that thinks to graſp and hold both heaven and earth in the ſame hand, and lodge them in the ſame heart, may as well imagine he can reconcile fire and water, and hide them together in the ſame boſome; when two men walk together, we know not whoſe ſervant it is that follows them, but when they part the ſervant owns his own Maſter: oh my ſoul, take heed of diſſembling with God, *that will not be mocked*; cloſe with him, and he will cloſe with thee; build upon the rock, ſo ſhalt not thou be ſhaken, and though at death thy body fall like a leaf, yet thy root ſhall remain: oh my God, let me not deceive my ſelf, let me lay a good foundation, then ſhall I ſtand in all ſtorms.

Upon

*Upon a fruit-tree pelted with ſtones.*

91. *Med.* WHen I beheld a fruit-bearing-tree; that was richly laden with the choiſeſt fruit, and perceiving that this tree above all the reſt was preyed upon by the paſſengers, for almoſt every one had a ſtick or ſtone, a ſtaff, or ſtake, to throw at it, when thoſe trees that were barren, and worthleſs, or brought forth fruit ſowr or unſavory, were let alone, and none moleſted them, when their better neighbours were rent and torn in pieces, for their fruit ſake; this Obſervation made me think theſe fruit-bearing trees did much reſemble a fruit-bearing Chriſtian, for none in the world are more liable to ſufferings then they are, and that for their fruits ſake: the more real fruit they bring forth, and the more ſavoury fruit they bear, the more danger they are in, and the more blows they bear, both from hand and tongue when others that are Chriſtians, graceleſs, fruitleſs, and worthleſs, eſcape ſcot-free, and not one moleſteth them: many a one that leads a lewd vicious and debaucht life, who makes a trade of ſin, and lives in the conſtant breach both of divine and humane laws, yet eſcapes all Courts of Judicature, civil and Eccleſiaſtical, and all other moleſtations, and perſe-

cutions,

cutions, when an holy humble Chriſtian is oft entangled in the briars, and fleeced by thoſe to whom he flys for ſuccour, yet here lyes the difference between a fruitful Chriſtian, and a fruitful tree, the tree is beaten for the fruits ſake, but it is for love to it, and ſo is robbed and pilled and beaten like a man that fals among thieves, and is ſtript of his ſubſtance, the other is beaten alſo for the fruit ſake, but it is in oppoſition to it, and hatred of it: in the one the paſſenger deſires to enjoy it, in the other to beat it down: The beſt of men have met with the greateſt oppoſition, and the more eminent Chriſtians have uſually the more eminent oppoſers; the devil will not ſuffer them to be quiet: *Jeremiah* which was a great prophet, and lived an upright and unblamable life, was not free, *Jer.* 20. 7. *I am in deriſion daily, every one mocketh me, I neither* (ſaith he) *lend upon uſury neither do men lend to me upon uſury, yet every one curſeth me, Jer.* 15. 10. and it was not only tongue-perſecution, but that of the hand alſo, which he ſuffered, he was caſt into a miry dungeon, put into the ſtocks, hated by the Princes, and all his crime was, he ſpake the word of the Lord, what he had given him in charge to ſpeak; it was for his fruits ſake, that he was thus beaten: The like we reade of *David* a man after

ter Gods own heart, he had more fruit then others and therefore had more ſtones thrown at him for his fruit ſake, *Pſal.* 69. 18. *they that ſit in the gate ſpeak againſt me, and I was a ſong to the drunkards, Pſal.* 35. 15. *in mine adverſity they rejoyced, they gathered themſelves together, yea, the abjects gathered themſelves together againſt me, and I knew it not, they did tear me and ceaſed not, with hypocritical mockers in feaſts, they gnaſhed upon me with their teeth*: he met with hand perſecution alſo; for *Saul* fought his life, *and hunted him as a partrich upon the mountains*: Holy *Job* the beſt man living in his age, by Gods own teſtimony, yet he was not free, he was accuſed by the devil, robbed by the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*, forſaken by his friends, diſdained by his enemies, tempted by his wife, and ſcorned by the abjects, *Job.* 30. 1. *but now they that are younger then I, have me in deriſion, whoſe fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the dogs of my flock,* ver. 9. *yet now I am their ſong, yea, I am their by-word, they abhor me, they flee from me, and ſpare not to ſpit in my face,* &c. *Elijah, Eliſha, Amos* do not eſcape, *Joſeph, Daniel,* and his fellows are hated for their fruit; yea, all the Prophets: The Apoſtles alſo were made a gazing ſtock, and ſuffered both reproaches, and affliction, *Heb.* 10. 33. and thoſe Worthys of whom the world was not worthy, *Heb.*

*Heb.* 11. 35. &c. *they had cruel mockings and ſcourgings, bonds and impriſonments, they were ſtoned, ſawn aſunder, tempted,* &c. and it was for fruit that *Stephen* had ſtones caſt upon him, *but the diſciple is not above his Maſter*: Chriſt himſelf though *never man ſpake like him,* and never man did ſuch works as he did, yet never man did more unjuſtly ſuffer then he, never man ſo abuſed with hand and tongue, even to the taking away his precious life; he was hated by the world, and ſo ſhall all that bear his image: As bats fly from the light, ſo the blinde world cannot endure this ſun of righteouſneſs; as it is ſaid of ſome barbarous Nations under the Meridian, they curſe the ſun when it ariſeth for ſcorching them, ſo wicked men cannot abide to have the ſun ſhine too full in their faces, *light is come into the world, but men love darkneſs, becauſe their works are evil*; and though they agree not among themſelves, yet all join together againſt the power of godlineſs, like *Herod* and *Pilate* againſt Chriſt: though dogs worry one another, yet all ſet againſt the trembling hare, though *Ephraim be againſt Manaſſeth, and Manaſſeth againſt Ephraim, yet both are againſt Judah*: oh my ſoul, if thou bear any good fruit, expect ſome ſtick or ſtone, to be thrown at thee, and if thou meet with none, expect there is little fruit to be ſeen or found, or

that

that it is not good nor ſavoury; if thou doſt ſuffer for well-doing rejoice that thou art accounted worthy, and conſider all thou canſt ſuffer for Chriſt, is but a chip or ſplinter of that croſs which he bore for thee; and leave not heavens road for a ſcoff or ſcorn, leſt in hell the devil deride thee for thy folly; is thy good name more precious then his? he was reprocht for thee, and he that will not ſuffer a mock for Chriſt will hardly ſuffer death; thoſe that are aſhamed of him here, he will not own hereafter: oh my God, let me never leave the way for fear of the croſs, let me not think my bloud too good to ſhed for Chriſt, that thought not his too good to ſhed for me.

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*Upon fruit left on the trees after ſhaking.*

92. *Med.* IN the Autumn when fruit waxt ripe and the gathering time was come, when the trees were ſhak't, and the fruit gathered in, yet I beheld there was here and there an apple, pear or plum, or other fruit ſtill remaining on the trees, which ſtuck faſt notwithſtanding the ſhaking, and all the force and violence that had been uſed, but theſe were but a few, and thoſe commonly the ſoundeſt, and moſt durable: This brought to my minde the command

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of God in the time of the law, *Lev.* 19. 9, 10. *and* 23. 22. *Deut.* 24. 9. *&c.* where God commands the *Jews*, when they reaped their fields, to leave ſome of the corners thereof ſtanding, and not to gather up the gleanings, but to leave them for the poor, and when they ſhak't their olives, and other fruit trees, to leave ſome cluſters remaining, and not to gather the fruit in clean; that ſo it might be for the poor and needy of the land, and for the ſtranger for meat: we ſee how the chief Landlord, the great husbandman, the Lord of the vineyard the chief proprietor, how he lets out his farms, and what conditions he puts into his leaſes, and how he takes care of the poor that they ſhould be fed, for they alſo are a part of his family, and at his finding, and he hath appointed where they ſhall have their meat, and hath commanded his ſtewards to give it them in due ſeaſon: he would have the full cups of the rich to overflow into their empty diſhes, and thoſe that dine the poor entertain Chriſt himſelf, at their table as a gueſt! I obſerved alſo how little this command of God was obſerved by hard-hearted man, in our days, how little they reſpect his will, and how few make good this condition in the grant they have of all they enjoy, and how juſt it is therefore for God to recal his eſtate into his own hands,

hands, and to take the forfeiture; for though we receive all from God, and that with this *proviso*, and upon this condition, that the poor shall have their part, and their share out of it, yet he that gives all, and requires but a little, cannot have it, yea, though he would borrow a little of his own, he is ofttimes denyed it; though he promises to repay it, yea, to repay it an hundredfold, yet cannot be heard: where a man upon his bare word can borrow ten pounds, God cannot borrow ten pence, yea, of that which is his own, though never man made larger promises, and never man more faithfully fulfilled them; he hath told them, *he that giveth to the poor, shall not lack, Pro.* 28. 27. *but he that hides his eyes shall have many a curse*; curses both from God, and man; yet few believe this is the way to get wealth, they will hardly take Gods word for a groat, they will use their wit to save their money, but will not use their eyes, to affect their hearts; God shews them many an altar, but they have no sacrifice ready, but *he that shuts his ears at the poor mans cry, shall cry himself and not be heard, Pro.* 21. 13. this was fulfil'd in *Pharaoh, Haman* and the rich *glutton*. 'Tis not getting but giving is the true way to wealth, *Eleemosyna ars omnium quæstuosissima est*, (saith *Chrysostome*) alms is the most gainful art, *he shall have judgment without mercy*

*that will ſhew no mercy, Jam.* 2. 13. *he that hath pitty on the poor lendeth to the Lord, and he will repay him, Pro.* 19. 17. God accepts it both as a gift and a love, nay, *fœnerator Domino*, God takes it upon uſury, and gives ſecurity for it under his hand, but thoſe that now will not take Gods word, it is not long but God will not take theirs: but require up his talents, and alſo an account of their ſtewardſhip, and give away their talents to thoſe that will better improve them, and give them a reward with the unprofitable ſervant, *Mat.* 25. 28, 30. yea, ſentence them to everlaſting fire, *together with the devil and his angels*; for not feeding, cloathing, viſiting his hungry, naked, poor members, *Mat.* 25. 41. &c. and ſuch worthleſs, uſeleſs, ſapleſs men, are not more miſſed (as one ſaith) when they are gone then the paring of the nails, as they live undeſired, ſo they die unlamented; but at judgement their ſentence breaths out nothing but fire, and brimſtone, ſtings and horrors, woes and torments without end, or paſt imagination, here the worm of grief gnaws as painfully as the fire burns; now they are ſandblinde, and cannot ſee Chriſt in his members, but then when too late, their eyes will be opened, to ſee their folly: The conſideration alſo of this little quantity of fruit left upon the trees, after the ſhaking, made

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me think this reſembled the godly, that ſtand faſt, and remain firm after all the ſhakings that they meet with, when others froſt bitten by affliction, or toſſed by perſecution fall as leaves before the winde in autumn: many are the profeſſors in a ſun-ſhine day, but few can abide in a ſtorm, *though Iſrael be as the ſand of the ſea for multitude, yet but a remnant ſhall be ſaved, Rom. 9. 27. all are not Iſrael that are of Iſrael,* theſe are compared to the gleaning of the grapes after the vintage, *Iſay. 17. 6. here and there one, few in* comparilon: or to the ſhaking of the olive tree, where *two or three berries are left in the top of the utmoſt boughs, and four or five in the utmoſt branch, one of a tribe, and two of a family, Jer. 13. 14.* many ſhakings we have already had, and much unripe fruit is fallen, and when ſtronger windes ariſe we may imagine much more will down, but in the laſt ſhaking when Chriſt ſhall come like *refiners fire and fullers ſoap, Mal. 3. 3.* all that is rotten at heart will be diſcovered, then *the ſinners in* Zion *ſhall be afraid, fearfulneſs ſhall ſurprize the hearts of the hypocrites*; oh my ſoul, take heed of being blown down, nay, take heed of being rotten, for then down thou wilt, it is better be alone then in ſuch a company, and better go to heaven alone, then to hell with company; to ſtand againſt the ſtorm,

then to be blown down with the winde ; improve thy talents to Gods glory, and he will never let thee fall : oh my God, let no ſun of perſecution wither me, nor no boiſterous ſtorm bear me down.

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*Upon the many enemies fruit-trees have.*

93. *Med.* WHen I conſidered how many enemies fruit-bearing trees met withall, and the incumbrances that ofttimes hindred, and ſpoiled their fruit, I wondred that any brought forth fruit to maturity, for ſometimes they are planted in a bad ſoil, and then no wonder if they proſper not, ſometimes in too dry a place, and how then ſhould they proſper ? ſometimes in too wet, and then are poiſoned, and rendred barren ; ſometimes too high, and ſometimes too low, and both extremes are offenſive ; ſometimes in too fat a place, and then they grow too luxuriant ; often too lean and barren, when the earth cannot help them to bring forth their burthen, or yeild them ſap ; ſometimes for want of good huſbandry, they are troubled and peſtered with ſuckers, that draw the ſap to themſelves, and rob the tree, and run up into aſpiring branches, which overtop and overſhade their fellows, and the whole tree by this means

means is rendred unfruitful: ſometimes for want of fence the bark is pil'd off by the beaſts of the field, hares, rabbets, and other vermine, which rends the bark from the the body, and endanger, yea, ſometimes procure the death, not only of the fruit, but the tree alſo: and ſometimes they are bark-bound, which hinders their growth and thriving: ſometimes they are peſtered with moſs, canker and other obſtructions, to their no little dammages; and ſometimes moleſted by worms, moles, mice, ants, and ſuch like, whereby they are injured: ſometimes the winter proves unſeaſonable, and the ſpring unfavourable, that they never bloom, and ſometimes when they are bloſſomed, and give good ground of hopes; yet in a moment all our hopes are daſht, and they are ſudenly nipt with the froſt, or blaſted with lightning, or the Eaſt-winds; ſometimes they are rendred unfruitful by overmuch drought, and ſometimes by too much wet; for both may be injurious both to the tree and to the fruit: and too much wet alſo is offenſive, and renders the fruit the worſe: if they paſs theſe dangers, and are loaden with fruit, much of it is oft conſumed by waſps, hornets, and other inſects, yea, ſometimes not only the fruit, but alſo the leaves are eaten by locuſts, caterpillars, and ſuch like flys, and many times with

worms: ſometimes for want of fence, they are undermined by ſwine, or broken, bruiſed or fed upon by other cattle, and oftentimes the unripe fruit is born down by a mighty ruſhing winde, and all our hopes thus ſudenly daſht which is no unuſual accident: as it is ſaid, *Rev. 6. 13. and the ſtars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree caſteth her untimely figs, when ſhe is ſhaken by a mighty winde*; that is, violently and forcibly, and if they eſcape all theſe accidents, many prove barren, and many bring forth fruit that is ſowr, bitter, or unſavoury, and very little fruit that is good appears, and if it do, all the danger is not over, many a blow they endure, and many a ſtaff, and many a ſtone is caſt at them to unload, unburthen, and deprive them of their fruit; and there is ſcarce a paſſenger but hath ſomething or other to throw at them, and few go away empty-handed from them; and no wonder then the owners part is little and a ſmall pittance comes to be gathered in: The conſideration of this, made me to compare poor man to theſe trees of the field, and to conſider what is the reaſon ſo few bring forth fruit to maturity; many an obſtruction they meet with before the time of fruit comes, which hinders the moſt of men from fructifying; many are planted in the dry deſart heath, where

*they*

*they see not when good cometh*, and that never heard of a saviour come into the world, or ever enjoyed one soul searching sermon, and these are not like to bring forth good fruit; they are like to be barren, or their fruit to be wilde, yea many of those that live within the pale of the Church are not much better, it is true, the seed is sown amongst them but much of it falls *by the way-side, and the fouls of the air pick it up*, the devil steals it out of their hearts; this is that troubler of *Israel*, that master of misrule, he is one at Church whoever is the other, he hath made a foot-path over the heart, that the word takes no more impression then rain upon a rock; these must needs be barren, yea, some of it, *fals among stones*, where it hath no root, which though received with joy, and it springs up sudenly, yet wanting root, must needs wither, *the root of the matter is not in them, Job.* 19. 28. *and some falls among thorns, and is choaked*; *these* (saith Christ) *are the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches*; and it is much ado to handle those thorns, and not prick their fingers, and but a little *fals in good ground*, and that undergoes a thousand dangers ere it come to maturity; many are the obstructions a Christian meets with, and many pul-backs the gracious soul hath, and the good seed sown hath many enemies, some-

times it is parcht with the ſun of proſperity, and ſometimes nipt with the froſt of adverſity; the devils temptations, and the worlds allurements, oft ſpoil the fruit; ſometimes it withers for want of the dew of heaven to refreſh it, ſometimes it is overwhelmed with the flouds of affliction, a thouſand, and ten thouſand are the dangers this ſeed of grace doth undergo before it comes to maturity; many trees in the orchard are not tranſplanted, and ingrafted into Chriſt, and many enemies thoſe meet with that are, and the little fruit that is brought forth to maturity, will have many a ſtick and many a ſtone caſt at it; oh my ſoul, haſt thou any ſtone caſt at thee, any reproach caſt upon thee, art thou perſecuted and hated for doing thy duty, deſpair not, it is a ſigne there is ſome fruit: the traveller ſeldome throws at the barren tree, and the devil ſeldome throws down his own fruit; haſt thou many enemies, Chriſt himſelf had not a few; live uprightly toward man, holily towards God, that they may have no juſt occaſion againſt thee, but for ſerving God, and let them throw and ſpare not, bring forth much fruit to God, and doubtleſs he will wall thee in, and defend thee. O my God, mine enemies are many and ſubtil, powerful and malicious, be thou my defender, and let my fruit be pleaſant to thy taſte, and ſweet to thy ſmell.

*Upon*

*Upon a fair apple rotten at the core.*

94. *Med.* TAking notice of a beautiful apple, glorious to the eye, having a promiſing aſpect, a ſmoosh skin and a fair outſide, yet when it was cut, it proved deceitful, rotten at the heart, and corrupted within, and little good but a painted skin, and the corruption within would ſoon have brake forth and corrupted the outſide alſo; this apple ſo deceitful, lively repreſented to my thoughts an hypocrite, who in outward carriage and demeanour, and formalities, makes a fair ſhew, and in the external performance of duties repreſents a true Chriſtian when the heart is rotten, and the vitals of Religion are wanting, and there is nothing but a ſheepsskin drawn over a wolfs body; nothing but plaſter and paint, yet ofttimes ſo artificially done, that it is hard to diſcover it from ſincerity, in the external parts of Religion: many times he outſtrips many ſincere Chriſtians, and acts his part ſo cunningly, that many times he is taken for the man he repreſents: he oft makes a fair ſhew to the world, and holds out a more fairer profeſſion in the ſight of the ſun, then the Saints themſelves; for they may afford to pay more for the colour, for the cloath coſts them nothing; what others beſtow

beſtow in the lining, they lay it out on the outſide; like an old withered baud, rotten within, and painted without; but the rottenneſs that lies at the heart, many times breaks out, and rots the life and converſation alſo; for corruption within will break out: our Saviour Chriſt did lively repreſent theſe men by *painted ſepulchers*, and *whited tombs*, glorious to the eye, but within full of filthineſs, and putrefaction, *Mat.* 23. 27. *wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, hypocrites, for you are like unto whited Sepulchres, that appear glorious to the eye, but within are full of dead mens bones and all uncleaneſs*; ſo do ye in the eye of the world appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocriſy and iniquity: fair profeſſors but foul ſinners; there are many with *Pilate* will waſh their hands, but few will waſh their hearts, *Mat.* 27. 24. this alſo the Phariſees did, but this is too weak an element to waſh off guilt, which is not purged but by the blood of Chriſt, or the fire of hell; but God and nature begin at the heart, and ſo muſt a Chriſtian that would be cleanſed; *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, waſh thy heart from wickedneſs, how long ſhall vain thoughts lodge in thee? Jer.* 4. 14. *cleanſe your hands, ye ſinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded, Jam.* 4. 8. both heart and life muſt be reformed, but reformation ſhould begin at the heart, or it will never rightly

ſeaſon

ſeaſon the life: the moſt men begin reformation at the wrong end, they lop off ſome of the bigger branches of ſin, and it is well they do ſo, many go not ſo far, when the root remains firm and untouched: and hence it is it quickly ſprings again, at the next gale of opportunity or warm gleam of temptation; they are ſeeking to cleanſe the ſtream when the fountain that feeds it is corrupt, they would make the fruit good when the tree is bad, but this is but labour loſt, the way is firſt to cleanſe the fountain, and then the ſtream will be clear; let the tree be grafted, and the fruit will be better; the hypocrite like a glowworm makes a great ſhew in a dark night, but if you touch her, ſhe yields neither fire nor heat; I have read of a *Roman* Senatour, that was giving audience to an Embaſſadour, but beholding his coloured hair, and painted face, ſaid, what ſincerity can we expect from theſe men, whoſe very locks, and looks, and lips do lie? ſo theſe mens looks, and words, and actions lie, and ſhew that outwardly that is not inwardly there in the heart: hypocriſy may be ſpun with a fine thread, that it can be hardly diſcerned in the ſtuff, but uſually it is ſeen in the wearing, for uſually it is not durable, neither will it endure a ſtorm, but will ſhrink in the wetting; *will the hypocrite pray always?* (ſaith *Job*) intimating, he will not;

not; they are like the ſhort-winded *Bethulians*, faint after a turn or two: fained converſion often proves unfained apoſtaſy; thoſe *that receive not the truth in the love of the truth, will hardly* dye for the maintenance of the truth; thoſe that have not the root of the matter in them, will ſoon wither, 1. *John* 2. 19. *they went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us, but they went out that they might be made manifeſt, that they were not all of us*: hypocrites are in the Church as tares among the corn, and chaff among the wheat, or as a wen or ulcer on the body, or a wooden leg; when a ſeperation is made, the corn is the better, and the body never the worſe; the fooliſh virgins had lamps in their hands as well as the wiſe, but wanting oyl in their veſſels, & grace in their hearts, were ſhut out: thoſe that only pretend to holineſs and the power of godlineſs, and not intend it, are like unto *Uriah*; they carry their own condemnation about them, for if Religion be not good, why do they profeſs it? if it be good, why do they not practice it? if they would not have the tree of ſin kil'd, why do they lop off the branches? if they would, why do they not ſtock it up by the roots? if when they pray that God would mortify their ſin and heal them of their hypocriſy, they would

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not have God hear them, why do they pray? if they would, why do they not endeavour it as well as beg it? if hypocrisy be good, why do they pray against it? if it be bad, why do they wittingly and willingly use it? if they would not have the stream clean, why do they purge it? if they would, why do they not cleanse the fountain that it may be clean? they should be as they seem, or seem as they be; they should practice what they profess, or profess what they practice; *I would* (saith God) *ye were either hot or cold*; he likes not a lukewarm temper; their profession is but a fantastick fire, kindled in their own tinder-box: oh my soul, see thou be sound at the heart, that the life of Religion be in thee, and not the dead image; if the heart be rotten, sooner or later it will break out into the life; see that there be oyl as well as a lamp, and practice as well as a profession: oh my God, without thine assistance my heart will deceive me: Lord, make my heart sound in thy statutes.

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*How little comfort the world can afford without food.*

95. *Med.* WHen I had for a considerable time recreated my self a-

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mong the flowers in the garden, and among the trees of the orchard, sometimes solacing my self in the silent walks therein, sometimes under the shady trees, or in the green alleys, delighting my self in the beautiful aspect, various forms, scent and savours of the flowers, and herbs, and contemplating their vertues and operations, which led me by the hand to admire the Creators wisdome and goodness, to make all these for the use of poor man; and it made me consider, how ill God was requited by man for all these mercies; and thus spending my time, sometimes in reading, sometimes in meditating, and in these exercises I continued; sometimes walking, sometimes sitting, sometimes lying, or in such postures as pleased my minde, or suited my fancy; sometimes taking delight in hearing the sweet singing birds, at other times in the cool refreshing gales of winde that gently breathed upon me, and qualified the heat of the day: in a word, sometimes taking delight in one thing, sometimes in another, till at last I began to be an hungry, and my craving stomach spoil'd much of the delight and satisfaction that I had taken before in those enjoyments, the pleasant sights, the sweet smells, the melodious harmony, which before so pleased me, now began to give me no content or comfort, my craving

ſtomack ſpoils all the ſport, and all the delight vaniſhed; and although I purpoſely propounded ſeveral delightful objects to my ſelf to divert my thoughts, yet nothing would do it, no meditation would faſten, no thoughts fix in my minde, but the thought of meat: This put me in minde of the fable of *Midas*, that when he had gotten liberty of the Gods, to wiſh what he would, with a promiſe that it ſhould be granted, wiſht that all he toucht ſhould be turned to gold; which was immediatly done, but when he came to eat and to drink, his meat and drink turned to gold alſo, and ſo loſt its nutritive vertue, and ſo in the midſt of his riches he was reduced to the greateſt extremity, and ready to periſh for want of food, and became more miſerable then the pooreſt beggar: I thought with my ſelf if that which is fabled of him were verifyed of me, that I were able my ſelf with my touch to turn all thoſe herbs and flowers, graſs, and trees into gold, yea, the ground I trod upon, and all that I did either ſee, or feel, how little ſatisfaction would this bring me without meat? one meals meat would bring me more content in my need, then all this, for this would prove but a rich famiſhment; oh vain man how apt art thou to thirſt after that which can do thee no good, for this life, nor that to come, and canſt not

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thou content thy ſelf without it, though thou haſt that which is far better ? oh bewitching gold, with what charms doſt thou infatuate the minds of men, to doat after thee ; when thou canſt never ſatisfy the minde or ſtomack ? yet art thou become the price of bloud, yea, the price of ſouls, and many a man ſells his ſoul to the devil for thee, to live in endleſs, eaſeleſs, and remedileſs torments : I found by experience that had I had all the wealth in the world, and all the gold in the *Indies* in exchange for my meat, my condition would have been worſe then it is, yea ; worſe then the pooreſt beggar that goes from door to door, yea, then that of the gally-ſlaves in *Turky*, and one meals meat would do me more good then all this : this minded me of Gods goodneſs, and mans unthankfulneſs , he gives us what is neceſſary and ſatisfactory, we thirſt after that which is neither neceſſary nor ſatisfactory. : From this Conſideration my meditation aroſe a little higher, and I began to think that food was as neceſſary for the ſoul as for the body, for where life is, there muſt be food to maintain it , and ſpiritual life requires ſpiritual food : I began to conſider whether ever I was ſo ſenſible of the want of ſpiritual food as I was of temporal ; and found by experience how vain earthly delights were, and how unſatisfactory without

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out food; but oh how little, yea, too little ſenſible I am of the want of ſpiritual food; how little appetite have I to that bread which came down from heaven, and that *ſincere milk of the word*, that heavenly *manna* which is daily ſpread about our tents: this made me alſo conſider, how it is with a poor hungring, thirſting, panting ſoul after Chriſt, that crys out, give me Chriſt or elſe I die, and it is no wonder, that nothing but Chriſt can ſatisfy ſuch a hunger-ſtarved ſoul, for if neither ſweet ſmels, pleaſant ſights, delightful muſick, nor any earthly enjoyment, nay, gold it ſelf, the quinteſcence (as many imagine) of all earthly happineſs, can ſatisfy an hungry man without meat, or a thirſty man without drink, ſurely then neither riches nor honours, pleaſures, nor preferments can ſatisfy an hungry ſoul without Chriſt; for though the devil ſtill many that cry for Chriſt, with the world, as a nurſe doth a childe that crys for gold with a counter, yet where there is a knowledge of the worth of Chriſt, and the want of Chriſt, where there hath been a taſte of Chriſt, he cannot thus delude them: an hungry man is not ſatisfied with a cake of clay, nor an hungry ſoul with a painted bible: oh my ſoul, how is it with thee? didſt thou ever thus hunger, thus thirſt after Chriſt? and nothing will ſatisfy but

Chriſt; doubtleſs God will ſatisfy thy longing deſire; but if thou art ſatisfyed with any other thing, thy hunger is not right: O my God, work in me this ſpiritual appetite to this heavenly food, and then give me this bread of life.

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*Upon the worth of meat, to thoſe that know the want of it.*

96. *Med.* WHen I had well refreſht my ſelf with meat, after I had been hungry and fainty, I began to know the worth of it by the want of it, I found that hunger was the beſt ſauce, *the full ſoul* (ſaith *Solomon*) *loatheth the hony-comb, but to the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet, Pro.* 27. 7. this holds true in ſpirituals alſo, that which *David* accounts *ſweeter then honey and the honey-comb*, is now trampled upon by ſtall-fed beaſts, in whom fullneſs hath bred forgetfulneſs, and ſaturity ſecurity; the Phariſees found no ſweetneſs in Chriſts own Sermons; no wonder then if in our times men begin to ſurfet on the bread of life, and loath the word, the honey-comb it ſelf, but hunger ſeaſons homely proviſion, courſe fare, doves dung, and aſſes heads, as in the ſeige of *Samaria*: great *Hunniades* never fared better then in his hunger with a poor Shepherd,

herd, with bread and water, and onions; I considered the providence of God, how rich he was in his goodness, not only in giving life, but also in giving food to maintain life, in giving a stomack to receive and digest this food, otherwise the choisest food would be nauseous, and in giving a blessing to this food, and a nutritive faculty, otherwise it would do no good; if any of all these were wanting, mans life could not be preserved; I considered that bread which is called *the staff of life*, and indeed the cheifest of all food for the preservation of life, it springs out of the earth, as all other food doth, and there can be nothing but the blessing of God, that differenceth it from the earth; now if we eat bread, we are satisfyed, but if we eat earth we die; for God never blessed the earth, or put such a vertue into it as to nourish us; now it is only Gods blessing that differences the one from the other in its operations; for had God blest the earth to this end and purpose, it would have sustained us as well as corn that springs out of it, but that blessing is denied to the one, which is given to the other; the beasts of the field are fed by the grass, this will not keep man alive, yea, the serpents food seems to be the dust, *Gen.* 3. 14. for what else they feed on I know not, and it might have been ours, had God pleased,

ſed, yea, every *ſpecies* of the creatures, hath ſome peculiar food appropriated to it, and what is ſuitable to one, is diſagreeable to another; now though there be bread provided, it is neceſſary there muſt be life, for what good will food do in a dead mans mouth? yea, it is neceſſary alſo, that there be a ſtomack rightly qualified, for if the ſtomack refuſe it, it cannot nouriſh, and all theſe are Gods gifts; ſome men we ſee are cloathed more richly, and fed more daintily, *they eat the fat, and drink the ſweet*, yet languiſh for want of health, when others are fat, and well-liking with meaner food, as *Daniel* and his fellows looked better with *pulſe and water*, then others did with the Kings meat, *Dan.*1. 15. it is a mercy to have food, and it is a mercy to have ſtomacks to eat it, and it is no leſs a mercy to have the bleſſing of God upon it, that it may nouriſh us: for this is one of the greateſt outward mercies we enjoy, and tends as much to our external happineſs; this minded me of the Apoſtles injunction, 1*tim.*6.8. *we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we ſhall carry nothing out, and having food and rayment, let us be therewith content*; *for godlineſs with content is great gain*; true piety is true plenty, it is ſtoried of the *Chaliph of Babilon*, that he was ſhut up amidſt the infinite treaſures of gold, ſilver and precious ſtones, which he had covetouſly

covetously heaped together, and there was starved to death, by the great *Cham of Cataia*, who yet willed him to eat, and make no spare: and it is no strange thing, for gold and silver were never appointed, or blest by God for mans sustentation; food and rayment not junkets, are necessary; meat and drink (saith *Jerome*) are a Christians riches, and well may we be content with this, if we knew the want of it; many poor creatures, yea, able Christians, better then our selves, have suffered much, in *Germany*, and of late years in *Ireland*, so that dogs, horses, rats and mice, and such like vermine, were esteemed good food: in the seige of *Samaria*, there was such a famine, that *an asses head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of doves dung for five pieces of silver*, 2 *Kin.* 6. 25. and in *Samaria*, and afterwards in *Jerusalem, the hands of the pitiful women sod their own children and eat them, these were their meat in their distress*, 2 *Kin.* 6. 28. *Lam.* 4. 10. but blessed be God, we know not want, nor feel not sorrow; but what good would all the wealth in the world do us, if we wanted food; Jems and Jewels, would be little worth, crowns and kingdomes would yield us no comfort, bread would be of more worth to us then its weight in gold, yet without the blessing of God this would not serve our turn, or pre-

ſerve our lives: how then dare men provoke this God by abuſing theſe his bleſſings? *man lives not by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God*, *Mat.* 4. 4. that is, by every thing that God bleſſeth to that end: if we want bread therefore, let us depend upon him, that can preſerve us without bread, as one of the *Martyrs* ſaid, when he was threatened to be famiſhed, *if God take away my meat, he can take away my hunger*, *Pſal.* 37. 3. *truſt in the Lord, and do good, ſo ſhalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou ſhalt be fed*: one promiſe will do us more good then all our gold, *Hab.* 3. 17, 18. *though the fig-tree ſhould not bloſſome, and there be no fruit in the vine, though the labour of the olive ſhould fail, and the field ſhould yield no meat, though the flock ſhould be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the ſtall, yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation*; though *Hagars* bottle be empty, God will ſhew her the well; though the ſhip be broken, God will prepare a plank: oh my ſoul, truſt in God for thy bodily food, he that feeds the ravens will not ſtarve the children, but reſt not ſatisfied till thy ſoul be fed with the bread of life; oh my God, on thee I depend for food, both for body and ſoul; Lord, feed both, and with food give a bleſſing, that both ſoul and body may be nouriſhed by it.

*The world is not a reſting-place.*

97. *Med.* WHen I had been recreating my ſelf in the garden, tired with ſtudyes, and other employments, I found ſome divertiſement for a while among the various delights, that there offered themſelves to my ſences, and unbent the bow that was beginning to grow weak, through over-intent ſtudies, and other imployments: I paſſed the time for a ſeaſon in the viewing and obſerving of Natures garden, not without ſome delightful obſervations, but at laſt, night approached and my pleaſures began to vaniſh: The birds which before delighted my ears with their melodious harmony, were now gone to reſt, and thoſe herbs and flowers, which before delighted my ſences now diſappeared, and their various colours, forms and ſhapes could not be diſtinguiſhed, but were all died in one ſable colour, for univerſal darkneſs had ſpread her ſable mantle over all, and every thing was ſtained in the ſame die-fat, and I was left alone, though in the midſt of company, deprived of the delights which before I had, the cold air began to pierce me, and the croaking frogs and toads which all this while had hid themſelves from my ſight, were now crept forth

and were like to be my bed-fellows, if I lodged there, and bats and owls, thoſe birds of the night, were my companions; this made me to conſider, how unpleaſant this place of delights, the greateſt recreation I had in the world for my body, would be to me at this time, had I no other habitation, and how unpleaſant the night would be to me: here I lay open to winde and weather, liable to be wet with the dew of heaven, and was like to have the air for my ſupper, and with *Jacob* a ſtone for my pillow; I conſidered now, though I too often forget it, the great goodneſs of God to the *juſt and to the unjuſt*, to cauſe his ſun to ſhine upon them, one ſun makes a day, but the moon and all the ſtars make but a night, but what a mercy is it then, when the *ſun of righteouſneſs ariſeth with healing in his wings?* The unpleaſantneſs of the preſent ſeaſon to me, made me pitty many poor creatures that are neceſſarily expoſed to theſe, and worſe then theſe hardſhips, as ſouldiers lodging in the fields, yea, many wandring people that in the winter ſeaſon ſuffer much, as for thoſe that deſignedly endure this life, rather then expoſe themſelves to labour, are not to be pittied, correction is a fitter ſalve for their ſore: but there are many aged and impotent, lame, and unable, that ſhould be better cared for, and I fear God hath

hath a controverſy with the nation upon this account; this conſideration driven up to the head, made me bleſs God this was not my condition, and to fear leſt my ſins and unthankfulneſs might provoke God to make it my condition: This raiſed my meditation a little higher, and I thought with myſelf, if this garden, this place of delights be no comfortable abiding-place for the body when night comes, ſure then the world is no reſting-place for the ſoul, for death will come: here in the day-time of life man may take ſome delight, *but the night will come, when no man can work*, and when all theſe things ſhall vaniſh, I muſt ſeek out for ſome better ſhelter, ſome better lodging, ſome better reſting-place for my ſoul: when night comes, and the ſun is ſet upon me, all theſe delightful objects will be gone, will forſake me, and hide their heads, and they will yeeld no delight, no comfort or refreſhment; crowns and kingdoms, dirt and dung, will then be valued alike, and a piece of lead will be as good as a piece of gold, or an heap of diamonds; theſe outward things can afford neither food nor phyſick, neither lodging nor entertainment, neither pleaſures nor profit, to the weary ſoul; theſe earthly tabernacles ere long will be diſſolved, and theſe houſes of clay, will moulder into duſt, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. and what

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ſhall we then do, if we are no better provided? the ſoul here wears the body as a garment, which when it is worn out, the ſaints ſhall have a better ſuit, *they ſhall be cloathed with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; death will not ſpare the beſt, there is no coming to paradice but under the flaming ſword of this guardian that ſtands at the porch, no wiping all tears from our eyes, but with our winding-ſheet; aſſurance of Gods love makes a man even willing to die, but the cock on the dunghill knows not the worth of this jewel; oh the blindneſs, madneſs, and ſtupidity of man, whoſe care is to lade *himſelf with thick clay*, and to take care *what he ſhall eat, or what he ſhall drink, or wherewithall he ſhall be cloathed*, and makes no proviſion for the ſoul, but depends upon that for comfort, that can do no good when moſt need is; they can provide in the day for the night, in the ſummer for the winter, on the market-day for the whole week, and at a Fair for the whole year, and yet make no proviſion in life for death, or in time for eternity: if a cœleſtial habitation be not provided againſt thoſe houſes of clay, our bodies, wherein the ſoul lodgeth as a tenant at will, be diſſolved, our lodging will be worſe then with toads and ſerpents, even with the devil and his angels, in endleſs, eaſeleſs, and remedileſs torments: oh my ſoul how fares

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it with thee, or what preparation haſt thou made? long it cannot be before night comes, where then will be thy lodging? the earth then will be to thee as the waters to *Noahs* dove, thou wilt finde no reſt here for the ſole of thy foot; it is in heaven *that the weary be at reſt*, *Job.* 3. 17. oh my God, enable me to clear up my intereſt in Chriſt, who is the only ſanctuary for a troubled ſoul.

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*Upon ſickneſs ſpoiling all earthly delights.*

98. *Med.* WHen I had fitted things to my minde, and began to take delight in the works of my hands, when I began to ſing a *requiem* to my ſelf, and my heart (with *Solomons*) *rejoyced in all my labour*, *Eccl.* 2. 10. yea, when I had promiſed my ſelf content in what I had done, I was ſuddenly forced to ſay with wiſe *Solomon*, *Eccleſ.* 14. *behold all is vanity and vexation of ſpirit*; nothing in themſelves, yet ſufficient to vex and perplex us; ſin hath produced a confuſion in the world, and ſtampt vanity upon the creature, *every man* (ſaith *David*) *in his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*; this is the impartiall verdict brought in by one that could beſt tell, and to this I was forc't to ſubſcribe, for God immediatly humbled me for ſetting my affection upon creature-comforts, and let me ſee the vanity of

of them, by viſiting me with a fit of ſickneſs, that I was taken off from ſetting my delight, or taking ſatisfaction in or upon them, or taking any pleaſure in any thing that I had done, nay, I was troubled that I had not ſpent my time better, and that I had not planted, ſet, or ſown in a more fertile ſoil, where I might have expected a more plentiful encreaſe, and had a better crop: this providence ſeemed to ſpeak to me, as Chriſt did to the rich man, *Luk.* 12. 16. &c. that ſet his heart on his riches, and *was not rich to God; thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee, and then whoſe are theſe?* this ſhewed me more of the vanity of humane felicity, then I had before obſerved; I plainly ſaw there was a double uncertainty in all earthly felicity, and in ſublunary enjoyments, for they themſelves are very uncertain, and many times ſhort-lived, and may leave us, or we may by death be arreſted, and then we ſhall leave them; God ſometimes takes them from us, *they take themſelves wings and fly away, and ſhall we ſet our eyes upon things that are not? Pro.* 23. 5. there is no ſolid ſubſtance in them, though the fooliſh world call it by that name; they are as tranſitory as a haſty headlong torrent, but if they remain we ſhall remove; for our life paſſeth away as a ſhadow, or poſt, or weavers ſhuttle, and continueth not, and then thoſe winged fouls that now ſit upon our trees, ſhall ſit upon

on other mens, ſometimes God blows upon them, and blaſts them, that though we do enjoy them, they prove but a vexation to us: ſometimes he diſables us to uſe them, and ſometimes imbitters them to us, mixing them with gall and wormwood, that we can finde no pleaſure in them, and aſſuredly they will do us little good, when we have moſt need; ſuppoſe a man to have what the world can afford, yea, *all the delights of the ſons of men*, yea, all that his heart can wiſh, as *Solomon* had, *Eccl.* 2. 27. yet one hours ſickneſs ſpoils all his mirth, and robs him of all the comfort he promiſed to himſelf; one fit of the collick, gout, ſtrangury, or other raging pain, yea, the extream pain of an aking tooth, puts a man beſides all theſe his enjoyments; yet how greedily do men graſp after the world, as if it included the higheſt degree of happineſs, and hug it in their boſome, and lodge it neareſt to the heart, which will prove no better, nay, much worſe then a buſh of thorns, if graſpt too hard; ſo this, the harder it is handled the worſe it hurts; oh foliſh man, cannot theſe earthly enjoyments give eaſe to an aking head, or heart? can they not mitigate the pains of the gout, collick, ſtone, or ſtrangury, and can it be imagined they can eaſe the conſcience, or cure a ſinſick ſoul? if not, what good can they do it? could *Judas*, *Achitophel*, *Spira* and others, fetch any comfort here in their

their extremity, no, no, they are like *Jobs* friends, *miſerable comforters* at ſuch a time; what good will gold do at death, and judgment? this coin is not currant in the other world, nay, in this world it brings little content, if God frown: if one ſpark of hell-fire flaſh in the conſcience, all theſe things cannot extinguiſh it; one drop of it will mar a whole cup of earthly delights; *that in the midſt of laughter the heart will be ſorrowful, and the end of that mirth will be heavineſs*, *Pro.* 14. 13. *nulla eſt ſincera voluptas*; wicked men may dance to the timbrel and harp, but ſuddenly they turn into hell, *Job.* 21. 12, 13. and their merry dance ends in a miſerable downfall; *the candle of the wicked ſhall out in a ſnuff*, and what will all theſe outward enjoyments ſignify then? *Jobs* flower, *Jonahs* gourd, and *Davids* green bay-tree, will ſoon wither, and their beauty will fade: all theſe things will leave us at death, many times before: how much need then have we to make preparation beforehand of ſomething that will ſtand us inſtead? This ſickneſs of mine alſo taught me how unfit a time this was for repentance, and yet how many poſt it off till then? oh, how unfit was I to examine my heart, and call my ſins to minde, to repent of them, when racking pains brought ſuch a confuſion upon me, that my thoughts were diſtempered and diſtracted, and I could not keep my heart intent upon any

any thing, when all I could do was little enough to wraſtle with my diſtemper; this made me reſolve, and oh that I could hold on my reſolution, if ever I recovered, I would remember my Creatour in the days of my health: oh my ſoul, ſeeing theſe outward things can do thee little good, but if overloved will do thee much hurt, ſet but a little value upon them, there is a treaſure to be had that will hold out, and pleaſures that will endure, which will keep up the head above water, under ſickneſs, ſorrow, and death; labour for this, but to ſpend time on that which one hours ſickneſs will put us beſides, it is but labour loſt: oh my God, give me that for my portion, that will bear up my head, and heart, not only in ſickneſs, but in death it ſelf.

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*Upon a rainy day.*

99. *Med.* IN a rainy and very tempeſtuous day, being driven into the houſe by the violence of the ſtorm, and the tempeſt proving ſo violent & furious, that the houſe it ſelf could hardly ſecure me from the fury of it: This made me conſider what a mercy it was in ſuch a ſeaſon to have a retiring place for ſhelter, and how uncomfortable it would have been to me, had I been forc't to have born the brunt of this raging ſtorm, and yet how little

little do we value these mercyes when we know not the want of them, and how few return praise to God that hath given us *houses that we builded not, and vineyards that we planted not. Deu. 6.* 11. saturity oft breeds security, and fulness forgetfulness, the moon at the full is furthest from the sun, and ofttimes suffers ecclips by the interposition of the earth, and so we are ofttimes like *Jesurin that waxed fat and kicked*, or like full-fed hawks, that will not know their master; neither do we pitty those that want houses, or whose houses at least are not able to secure them, or keep them dry; this put me in minde to bless my God that had made such a comfortable provision for me, that I seldom suffered upon this account, and to condole those whose condition was otherwise, I considered how great a mercy rain and waters were, that neither man, nor beast, nor tree, nor plant, that neither the rational, the sensitive, nor vegetative creature, could subsist, or live without it, and how dear and precious it was to the Patriarks of old, and in many places of the world at this day; how scarce it was with the *Israelites* in the wilderness, yea, was, and in many places is their constant, if not only drink, and many thousands have perished for want of it, and how it would be prized of us did we want it; yea, how often when the showers of heaven are restrained, do our fields languish, and the fruits

of

of the earth fail, and yet who is it that is thankful, when God gives us *the former and the latter rain in its season?* and yet how much are we engaged to God, in *England* above many other places? we seldom are reduced to such straits as others are, for want of water, but have abundance of fresh rivers, brooks, and torrents, yea, springs and ponds in most parts of the land, that man nor beast seldome want it; how would such a mercy be prized in many places of the world? and yet though water be such a mercy, when it is abused God can turn it into a judgement: he drowned the old world with it, and overwhelmed the *Egyptians* in the Red Sea, and many times in those Northern climats, he punishes us with immoderate rain, and showers, which oft-times proves the cause of scarcity and want, thereby teaching us, that the greatest outward blessings, if abused, may be turned into curses, and *a fruitful land made barren for the wickedness of those that dwell therein, Psal.* 107. 34. Having spent some time on these considerations, the storm continuing, the present providence brought to my minde the words of *Solomon, Pro.* 19. 13. *a foolish son is the calamity of his father, and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping; Pro.* 27. 15. *a continual dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike:* &c. this is like a tempest in the heaven, most troublesome, and most dangerous; when

a man comes home tired, with his labour and travail, and expects refreshing at his own house, and there is entertained, either with the continual dropping of rain upon his head, or with an unbridled scolding tongue of an unreasonable wife, both are troublesome, both are uncomfortable, a cross grained contentious yoak-fellow, whether man or woman, sowers all the comforts of life, and renders that relation the most troublesome, and uncomfortable of any in the world, which would otherwise be the sweetest and most delightful of all others: hence saith *Solomon, it is better live in a corner on the house-top, then with a brawling woman in a wide house*, *Pro.* 21. 19. a man had better abide abroad exposed to winde and weather, or crib himself up in any little angle or corner, then live with a contentious woman, that is ever brawling and brangling, for such turn *conjugium* into *conjurgium*, *marriage* into *mar-age*, and instead of love and amity they promote strife and emnity, and multiply curses instead of prayers; The marriage-relation is the most desirable, or the most detestable, of all others; none is more delightful where love and unity is, none is more hateful where strife and contention, envy and hatred bears the sway; and as family-peace is a desirable blessing, and family-jars an unsufferable torment, so peace among neighbours is a mercy, and the contrary a sore judgement;

but

but many like the *Salamander* live in the fire, they love to foment jars and contentions, and are never ſo well, as when they are ſowing diſcord, or working miſchief, *Pro.* 26. 21. *as coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire, ſo is a contentious man to kindle ſtrife;* many men are like mad dogs, they ſnarl at all, and would if they could bite all, and make them as mad as themſelves, ſome contentious Chriſtians alſo there are that in this fire burn and conſume their graces, not their vices; theſe grow in opinions and flouriſh with theſe leaves, ſeldome in grace, for their fruit is ſeldom ſeen, or it is bitter and unſavoury; they are ready to diſroab all others of their graces that attain not to the ſame pitch of opinion with themſelves, but the Church is little beholding to them, whoſe zeal ſets all into a combuſtion; but above all peace, peace with God, and peace with a mans conſcience is moſt to be deſired, yea, abſolutely neecſſary, which cannot be had, till we break our peace with ſin, and ſatan: oh my ſoul, ſtudy peace with all men, and holineſs, without which you ſhall never ſee God; ſtudy peace with thy relations, but eſpecially with thy God; and if thy ways pleaſe him, thy enemy ſhall be at peace with thee: oh my God, let not the devil by his wiles nor the world by her frowns or ſmiles make me break my peace with thee.

*Upon cold winter-weather.*

100. *Med.* IN ſtormy cold and winter-weather, when the fields were unfit for action, and the husbandman was retired into his cell, as the Souldier into his winter-Gariſon, I conſidered how neceſſary, how deſirable, how delightful, a dry houſe, fire, food, cloathing, lodging, and other neceſſaries were, to cheriſh and nouriſh, and ſhelter us from the violence of the cold, and how unpleaſant it was for man or beaſt to be abroad in the fields, and how unſuitable for action there this ſeaſon was; then conſidered I the folly of thoſe that made not preparation for ſuch a ſeaſon, that thoſe ſluggiſhly paſs away the Summer-ſeaſon that is fit for action in the field, and made no preparation in the harveſt, and ſo are deſtitute of food, of fewel, and other neceſſaries, to make their lives comfortable in the winter; for thoſe the holy Ghoſt ſends to ſchool to the *ant* or *piſmire*, *Pro. 6. 6. go to the ant thou ſluggard, conſider her ways and be wiſe, which having no guide, overſeer or ruler, provideth her meat in the ſummer, and gathereth her food in the harveſt*: poor man that was once captain in Gods ſchool is now turned down into the loweſt form, and to be taught by the meaneſt creatures; ſometimes to the birds, and to the lillies of the field, that depend upon divine

divine providence, ſometimes to the oxe and to the aſs, to learn dependence, and here to the *ant*, to learn diligence: theſe poor creatures may be called *lay-mens books*, for in them they may learn their duty, and not as many do *in diem vivere*, as the fouls of the air do: we ſhould learn dependence of them, but a provident care muſt be had, as one ſaith, *ne promus ſit fortior condo*, that our layings out be not more then our layings up; there is a care of the head lawful, but it is the care of the heart that is forbidden; a care of diligence there may be, a care of diffidence there muſt not be; but ſome fail on the one hand, ſome on the other, and it is hard to walk in the direct road: I alſo pitied thoſe that wanted the neceſſaries I enjoyed, and could not tell how to prepare them, when all their diligence and induſtry fell ſhort of neceſſaries; as there are too many poor families amongſt us, which ſhould be looked after, and I fear God will look after thoſe ſtewards he hath intruſted to feed them, and they neglect it; ſee *Mat.* 24.48. *Mat.* 25.41. I then called to minde the eſtate of poor Chriſtians in *Ireland*, in the beginning of the rebellion, that were ſuddenly ſtript of all, turned out naked and hungry, expoſed to winde and weather, to hunger and cold, to froſt and ſnow, to the loſs of many thouſands of their lives, and to very much hardſhip to thoſe that eſcaped; this example

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on the one ſide, diſcovered to me what injuries and wrongs, what hardſhip and miſeries poor creatures may be expoſed to; how uncertain theſe tranſitory enjoyments are, and how ſoon they may be loſt, and for ought I know this may be my own condition, how ſoon I know not, and what would I then give to be in ſuch a condition that I now am, although it be not altogether free from ſome troubles and hardſhip? it minded me alſo on the other ſide, of the cruelty of bloud-thirſty enemies, and what we may expect from them, if ever we fall into their hands, or lie at their mercy; and this made me admire Gods goodneſs to this nation in general, and to my ſelf in particular, that it is ſo well with us as it is, yea this conſideration made me more contented with my condition then before, and to bleſs God that he had made ſuch plentiful proviſion for me, that had deſerved ſo little at his hands; when he ſuffered thoſe Worthys of whom the world was not worthy, to have triall of *cruell mockings and ſcourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and impriſonments, they were ſtoned, ſawn in ſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the ſword, they wandred about in ſheep-skins, and goat-skins, being deſtitute, afflicted, and tormented, of whom the world was not worthy, they wandered in deſarts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, Heb.* 11. 36. I conſidered that though the enjoyment of theſe things be

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no certain ſign of the love of God, yet are they great engagements to engage the heart to God; and they are much too blame, yea, ſhall give a ſevere account, that willfully waſte or abuſe them in drunkenneſs, idleneſs, pride, prodigality, gaming, whoring, or any other vicious courſes, yea, they are too blame that withhold good from the owners thereof, or detain the poors portion from them, to whom it is due; Theſe conſiderations had, I raiſed my Meditations a little higher, and conſidered, that if an earthly habitation be ſo neceſſary in winter for the body, to ſhelter it from the violence of the weather, how neceſſary then will an habitation for the ſoul be, againſt theſe houſes of clay be diſolved, to keep off the ſtorms of divine vengeance? for what will become of thoſe then that have nothing to ſhelter them, or as good as nothing, the garments of their own righteouſneſs, which are too ſhort to cover them, and too thin to defend them, and cannot ſhelter the ſoul from divine vengeance, no better then a ſpiders web can the body from a cannon-bullet, theſe doubtleſs are bad husbands for the ſoul, though they may have care enough of the body: oh my ſoul, what condition doſt thou ſtand in, in reference to eternity? thou haſt been often ſummoned by death, and ſometimes made to look it in the face, and yet thy days, with *Hezekiahs* are lengthened

lengthened out, and God hath given thee more time to do thy work in; what preparation haſt thou made for it? haſt thou provided an habitation againſt thou ſhalt be turned out of this houſe of clay? haſt thou cleared up thy evidence for heaven and thy title to glory? if not, give thy ſelf no reſt till thy work be done, for then, and not till then, thou wilt be fit do dye: it is not a bare profeſſion that will ſerve thy turn, *the root of the matter muſt be in thee*, *Job.* 19. 28. a profeſſion without practiſe will do thee no good; oh my God without thy divine aſſiſtance I ſhall miſcarry, and without a lamp lighted by thy holy ſpirit, I ſhall never finde out the deceits that are in my own heart; Lord, grant that theſe my Meditations may be beneficial to my ſelf and others, that they may never riſe up in judgment againſt me another day, *Amen.*

FINIS.